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FROM AUGUSTUS TO AUGUSTINE

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FROM AUGUSTUS TO AUGUSTINE

ESSAYS & STUDIES DEALING WITH THE CONTACT AND CONFLICT OF CLASSIC PAGANISM AND CHRISTIANITY

BY

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TO

EMILY B. SIHLER

WHOSE SPLENDID SUPPORT AND SELF-DENIAL
DURING FOUR DECADES HAVE MADE POSSIBLE
THE EXECUTION OF THE GREATER TASKS OF
THE AUTHOR'S LIFE, THIS, THE LAST VOLUME
OF HIS PRODUCTION, IS WITH ALL SINCERITY
AND GRATITUDE INSCRIBED BY
THE AUTHOR

PREFACE

ORIGINALLY I composed these Essays and Studies in the years from 1916 to 1921, for the *Biblical Review*, a quarterly of New York, where they appeared in the issues from 1916 to 1922, generally every half-year. I must therefore here and now express my lasting obligations to the periodical named, and particularly to its wise and accomplished editor, Mr Robert M. Kurtz, without whose suggestion and support the series would never even have been conceived by me. I may here repeat the note with which the entire work was brought to conclusion: "It has been suggested[1] that these Essays and Studies might be gathered in a volume, with a title somewhat like this: '*From Augustus to Augustine*' *Essays and Studies dealing with the Contact and Conflict of Classical Paganism and Christianity*. They are really a complement of my *Testimonium Animae*[2] which engrossed all my faculties and resources from 1901 to 1908[3].

It would crown what has been a full half-century of devotion to his study of classic antiquity, could the present writer look forward to an eventide of usefulness to theologians, classicists, and perhaps also to historians and to students of Ancient Philosophy. But whether such *Pia Desideria* may or may not bear fruit, I close this long task with a grateful and humble expression of thanks to that Being who is the source of all Truth

[1] *E.g.* by the late Dr B. B. Warfield of Princeton, and by my friend Dr John Alfred Faulkner, of Drew Seminary, New Jersey.

[2] *Essays and Studies dealing with the Spiritual Elements in Classic Civilization*, New York, 1908, G. E. Stechert and Co.

[3] I have made a few changes here in the wording of the note.

and in whose hands is our breath and whose are all our ways (Dan. v. 23)."

But to proceed. I have at no point in these Studies leaned at all, either on secular historians like Gibbon and Gregorovius or on ecclesiastic historians from Neander downward,—that is to say, I examined their judgments and estimates with candid care, but my ambition here, as always in my former books, was to bring out the sources with absolute fairness and fidelity as far as in me lay. I need not say that the superb Repertory of Fynes Clinton was ever at my elbow. I beg to add also, that I hold at seventy what in earliest manhood I conceived as the principle of historical research, namely to give voice primarily to those utterances which were made in the generation presented, making due allowance for the differences, antipathies and sympathies of minds as presented by themselves, and without intruding any thesis or prejudice of my own.

In justice to myself and to this work I append a list of the ancient writers abstracted or excerpted in each case before the several monographs were composed. In the majority of cases I prepared an analytical index of the writer in hand. I have been greatly aided by the fact that New York University acquired many years ago the La Garde Library of Goettingen (in 1892) and also the Huebner Library of Berlin (in 1902). Here are my sources, or, if you prefer, my real material:

(I) *Christian.* Minucius Felix, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus of Lyons, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen *contra Celsum*, Arnobius, Lactantius, Eusebius Pamphili (*H. E.*, *Chron.* and *Praeparatio Evangelica*), Firmicus Maternus, some pertinent material in Ambrose

of Milan, Jerome (*Catalogus*, certain letters and *Chron.*), Augustine (pre-baptismal treatises, *Confessions*, *Letters*, *de Civitate Dei*), the two Spaniards Prudentius and Orosius (references to the Byzantines Photius and Suidas), certain parts of Socrates and Sozomenus, a few data in Theodoretus.

(II) *Pagan or Secular.* Lucius Seneca, Epictetus, M. Aurelius, (a few things in the Elder Pliny and Plutarch,) Lucian, Pausanius, Celsus (as preserved by Origen), Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, the Emperor Julian, Ammianus, Libanius, Symmachus, Servius, Macrobius, Claudian, Zosimus.

I must not omit here that superb collection of monographs: *A Dictionary of Christian Biography*, etc., etc., edited by Smith and Wace, London, four volumes, 1877–1887. All the contributors are by now dead, the last being Viscount Bryce, with whom I had the honour to correspond in 1911 and in 1921. The most eminent name, I believe, was that of Joseph Barber Lightfoot, whom to know, even in his books only, must be the avowal of a deep obligation.

ERNEST G. SIHLER.

University Heights,
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January 10, 1923

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CHAPTER I

THE SPIRITUAL FAILURE OF CLASSIC CIVILIZATION

A god to whom I cannot pray,
Pray, what is he to me?
Mont Blanc is he, or star afar,
Pentelic marble, Tigris clay,
Or isle in southern sea.

(*Testimonium Animae*, 1908, p. 311.)

THE age of the humanists has long gone by. In the country of the author, the United States, Greek, the chief element of classic culture, has passed into apogee, and, cruelly stricken by a policy of depreciation, it has suffered among us an almost uniform experience which we may call, without gloss or varnish, academic suppression. In this ever-widening vortex of academic return to unculture and crude utilitarianism, one islet remains rock-ribbed amid the billows of our time, one Greek book. This is the New Testament. In the Reformation it figured in all its intrinsic pre-eminence, when the renascence of Greek studies assigned it a central place. The Greek Testament constitutes both the irreducible minimum of Greek pursuits and also the book of absolute importance in the entire range of Greek letters, the greatest, nay, the one imperishable Greek book, the one book which contains within itself the power not only of bringing about ever and again a palingenesis of Christian faith, but also a regeneration in those souls which pass under its beneficent and sovereign influence.

In connection with the classics there has been an enormous amount of cant and phrase-mongering. Greek letters are, in many instances, dazzling and invigorating to ourselves in our youth, but our souls are dulled by the geological strata superimposed upon the texts in the form of erudition and ever-narrowing micrology during the last four hundred years—grammar, dialects, etymologies, phonetics—comparative and otherwise, biographical studies, institutions and antiquities of all kinds, numismatics and epigraphy, ancient philosophy and its sequence of schools and sects, excavations and ancient architecture, the ancient stage and the dramatic theories of Aristotle, the Roman satire and the Greek anthology, concordances of individual authors, the fragments of the Greek dramatists, manuscripts and their age and relative authority, scholiasts and their sources, the (elusive) chronology of Plato's Dialogues or the plays of Euripides, the Roman law, ante-Justinian jurisprudence, Philo's relation to Plato, the Fayum papyri, the ancient commentators on Aristotle, the influence of the Stoics on logic and on the theory of grammatical nomenclature—but I forbear. In this weariness, nay, senility, of our classicism it is simply an anachronism to speak of humanism any longer. We must resolutely cling to the texts. But these are not now any longer what they were to Filelfo, to Erasmus, to Colet or to Thomas More, literature absolute and *par excellence*, *bonae literae* alone and by themselves. Our time has, somehow, become critical and historical in the main.

The maturest productions of man in the pre-Christian period, the classics, constitute, and not merely for the Christian scholar, a revelation of the human soul of

quite a unique character. We can, I say, drift through the traditional channels or runnels of didactic life and classical teaching in the traditional manner of a scholastic body of delivery, with a little history and a little esthetics thrown in. But we can delve deeper and inquire: What was the course and character of the religion and worship, of the morality and conduct, of the Greeks and Romans among whom the church of Christ came up? Nor must we pass by their philosophers and other thoughtful men. No authority was imposed upon them from without. What did they achieve for the concerns of the soul? What did they give us? If any professional classicist goes on urging that the Greeks (an abstraction glibly uttered) were purely esthetical folk and had no spiritual wants or consciousness, I smile. No nation through its poets and thinkers ever produced so long a series of ethical theories as the Greeks. To speak more specifically, no ancient thinker has so striven to make the soul sovereign over the body and to emancipate it from this little world of sense and seeming as Plato has. Purely esthetical? No, indeed.

The gods and men of Homer and of Hesiod have for us, and particularly in our present quest, a primacy which is not that of a certain literary primogeniture alone. These epics in time settled down to be the basis of Greek, and even to some degree of Roman, education. The small élite of philosophical dissenters and critics and exegetes did not perceptibly affect or modify the current sediment of morals and religion absorbed by the myriads of the Greek world for a thousand years or more. We may introduce, if we so prefer, the academic term and concept of *anthropomorphism*; this may refine things for us, or mitigate them, but it

was alien to the consciousness of the mass of the Greek people. The first precept of historical research is this, that we must abstain from injecting our own consciousness or any subjective analysis into the study of the remoter past. It is unscientific, naïve, and mischievous withal. Bacon, on the whole, has well said: "For you may imagine what kind of faith theirs was, when the chief doctors and fathers of their church were the poets." We may cite a much-quoted utterance of Herodotus (II, 53): "But whence each of the gods arose, whether even they always were, all of them, what kind of beings they were, as to their shapes, they [the Greeks] did not know, so to speak, until the day before yesterday and yesterday" (compared with the hoary antiquity of Egyptian civilization). "For I think that Hesiod and Homer were, as to age, four hundred years before my time [*i.e.* before 430 B.C. or so], and not any more: these are the ones who made (we shall say fixed or canonized) a theogony for the Greeks, both bestowing upon the gods their appellations and discriminating their [various] honours and functions, and indicating their forms." With Homer one may compare the record of Pausanias, written in the sunset of Greek paganism, a faithful delineation of actual ritual and worship which abundantly testifies how naïvely and how stubbornly these things were actually conserved, cherished, and venerated precisely where they had sprung into being.

Zeus indeed, in Homer, moderates, directs, retards, accelerates, in one word, manages, but co-ordinate with him, and indeed often superior, is Moira or Aisa (Fate or Lot), a power gloomy and oppressive in the main. "Homer's conception utterly failed to keep apart the sphere of both activities, inasmuch as it sways to and

fro between distinguishing and amalgamating the deity and the will of fate[1]." In a way the minor gods in the plot and plan of the *Iliad* often approach the limits of positive disloyalty in their demeanour toward their father and overgod. These forces, indeed, humanized though they be, have but rarely the whole range of human joys, sorrows, and sympathies. All these undergods of Zeus are limited forces, living on from generation to generation of men, but to say it at once and once for all, *they are not good, not essentially good.* Their foibles and their passions are merely those of man, actual, average man. At one point in the epic Hera designs to divert her sovereign spouse from his management of things by her connubial blandishments. To accomplish this she resorts to Aphrodite, the goddess of sensual love and sensual beauty (*Iliad*, XIV, 198): "Give me now love and desire, wherewith thou overcomest all Immortals and mortal men." Aphrodite "spoke it and from her bosom she loosened the zone worked with the needle, splendidly composite, where all her blandishments were wrought: therein resided love, therein desire, there whispering persuasion which beguiles the minds even of those who think shrewdly." Neither Purity nor Humanity nor Mercy has a seat at the Olympian board. Often had Zeus fallen a victim to Aphrodite. So in reprisal (*Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, 35 sqq.) he fills her with a passion for the comely mortal youth Anchises. In all these epics the avowal of concupiscence is made with absolute frankness, as by the suitors of Penelope, or as between Odysseus, Kirke, Kalypso.

Athena, the motherless, offspring of the mind only

[1] C. F. Naegelsbach, *Homerische Theologie*, 2nd ed., 1861, p. 145.

of Zeus, seems indeed to rank immediately after him. Still she, too, in spite of all sculptural symbolism of later Pheidian art, is purely a force of shrewdness and prudence and discretion, utterly alien to goodness or mercy. She even seconds Achilles in his slaying of Hector; ignoble (*Iliad*, XXII, 276) in the most elementary sense of chivalry is her being in at the death of by far the noblest figure in the entire epic and draining deep the cup of revenge. She is supremely delighted with the faculty of her chief favourite, Odysseus, to lie diplomatically and (what is after all the chief sign of her favour) expeditiously and profitably (*Odyssey*, XIII, 220 sqq.). It is of the peculiar bliss of the Olympians that they may yield to concupiscence at will. Zeus himself (*Iliad*, XIV) relates to his own spouse (a grotesque lapse of psychological concinnity) some list of the rare and radiant beings, mortal and immortal, through whom mortal heroes traced paternity to him, staple of much Greek art and tragedy later on. The ballad of Demodokos (*Odyssey*, VIII, 269 sqq.) relates the amours of Ares and Aphrodite. The paramour compounded with the injured husband by paying a heavy fine. "Unquenchable laughter arose among the blissful gods, as they looked upon the devices of the shrewd Hephaistos" (326 sqq.). Much later on, as Homer more and more became the canonic book of Greek education, critics, exegetes, and teachers resorted to allegorical interpretation[1] and other devices of purging and refining exegesis. Still we must remember that the local legends, as they appear to us in Pausanias, in the eventide of Greek paganism, had a vitality, with their local identifications and their recurrent anniversaries, as tenacious

[1] See Dindorf's Scholia, Oxford, 1855.

as the recurrent seasons themselves, defying all the eruditional crusts gradually settling on the national epic.

In Crete unnatural vice (which for convenience sake we may justly name Greek vice) flourished, it seems, somewhat earlier than elsewhere in Hellas. And now we have some opportunity of gaining a closer vision, in a concrete case, of the probable genesis, or genetic process, by which many of the Greek legends of gods and men germinated and spread abroad. Ganymede (*Iliad*, XX, 232) "was the fairest of mortal men, whom too the gods snatched away on high to be cup-bearer, on account of his beauty, that he might dwell with the immortals." But add Plato's *Laws* (I, 636 C): "We all of us [all Greece] charge upon the Cretans the legend concerning Ganymede [alleging] *that they invented the story* (since it was the settled belief with them that their laws had come from Zeus) and that they superimposed this legend directed at Zeus, in order that, following the God, they may reap this pleasure also." Man deifies that which he would justify in himself. Thus, too, the youth in a Menandrian play of that decadent Attic society (a play Latinized by Terence in his *Eunuchus*):

> There was this painting, that is, the way in which they say Jove sent a golden rain into the lap of Danaë. I also began to view it, and because he [Jove] had played quite a similar game even of yore, my spirit rejoiced more greatly, that a god changed himself into a man, and came upon another man's tiles through rain for the purpose of fooling a woman. But what a god! who shakes the tops of temples with the crash of the heavens. A little human being that I am should not do it? [*scil.* satisfy my lust] Indeed I should and freely too.

There is then the essential kinship, nay, sameness, of gods and men. The gods, too, utter their most solemn oath by Styx (trickling shudderbrook), the symbol of cold death.

To them, too, it is awful, for the Olympians are the very personifications of life, pleasure, vigour; their immortality is often curiously vague and quasi-contingent (*Iliad*, XIV, 271 sqq., XV, 36). They are indeed abiding but sinful and morally weak themselves and cannot dispense with periodical consumption of ambrosia, the very stuff of immortality. There is nothing spiritual about them. As for the Book of the Dead (*Odyssey*, XI), we have space for but the one utterance of the mighty Achilles (*ibid.* 487): "Don't recommend death to me; I would prefer in the fields to be a day-labourer for another, with a man who has no land lot of his own, who has not much of a living, rather than rule over all the dead."

The philosophers of Greece, of course, in time began to deal with this matter[1], some in the spirit of angry protest, others in a fictitious conformity clothing itself either in moralizing allegory or physical interpretation, as the Stoics did, and later the Neoplatonists. Of the former class was Xenophanes of Kolophon who flourished about 540 B.C. "But mortals think that gods are born and have their own [*i.e.* men's] faculty of perception and voice and shape." "All these things did Homer and Hesiod assign to the gods, whatever among men is opprobrious and censurable, to steal, to commit adultery, and to deceive one another" (Mullach, *Fragmenta Philosophorum Graecorum*, I, 101 sq.). Why was Plato, in his survey of what education was to be in his ideal state, unfriendly to Homer? Not in so far as heroes figured in the national epic as they did, but on account of the myths dealing with the gods. The poets may invent (ψεύδεσθαι) (*Republic*, II, 377 sqq.) but they must invent, or lie, *nobly* (καλῶς); this Homer and

[1] Preller in Pauly, *Realencyclopaedie*, s.v. *Mythologie*, p. 349.

Hesiod[1] did not do. And if indeed the awful stories of Uranos and Kronos must be perpetuated, let it be donc in the smallest possible body of auditors. The ideal state, he goes on (378 B), has no place for these and such.

We observe that a mysterious or allegorical meaning (ἐν ὑπονοίαις) was interpreted into Homer even in Plato's time. "But, the young person cannot judge what is hidden meaning and what is not, *but what one at that age adopts as one of his notions, is wont to prove hard to wash out and incapable of dislodgment.*" The gods in the actual legends of Troy, of Niobe, the royal house of Pelops, etc., are the cause of evil, sin, and sorrow. "We should at least give the legends such a turn that humankind profited in the end from such harrowing trouble" (*Republic*, 380). Aristotle here, too, as everywhere, in that cool, dispassionate manner of the master analyst, deals with this matter: "The heavens and the upper space the ancients assigned to the gods, inasmuch as [this domain] was alone immortal" (*De Caelo*, p. 284 a, 12)[2]. Speaking of the heavens elsewhere (*Metaphysic*, XI, a, p. 1074 a, 38 sqq.): "It is a tradition descended from the ancients and from those of hoary antiquity left in the form of a myth to posterity, that these [the constellations] are gods, and that the deity embraces [περιέχει] all nature. The rest has been brought on in a mythical way with a view towards the persuasion of the many." If one were to put away this mythical and anthropomorphic investiture, "and seized only upon the primal point, viz. that they deemed the primal substances to be gods, one might deem that a statement made in a manner worthy of the deity. The ancients

[1] Cf. Herodotus, II, 53, cited above.
[2] Cf. also *De Caelo*, p. 270 a, 7.

made the gods out to be nothing else but men of eternal duration" (*ἀνθρώπους ἀιδίους*) (*Metaphysic*, II, 2, p. 997 b, 11). Aristotle in practical life conformed to traditions and usages, as this, that sneezing was a divine sign, a good omen (p. 962 b, 7), or when he says that God sends dreams or dream-visions (p. 462 b, 20). Nothing was simpler and more easily discharged than these functions of institutional conformity, because it was all bound up with anniversaries in the main, and the essence of these things was a body of externalities affecting the soul, conscience or hope not in the slightest degree. We must take back almost all the terms which we apply to religion, faith, creed or worship, church or prayer, remove from them all they now contain or connote for us or in us, and make of them quite positively empty shells before we can even conceive what they meant in the classic world.

The Stoics, too, held this historical view that the stars were first worshipped because they and their cycles impressed men as of eternity and imperishable[1]. They seemed to maintain the figures of current Greek mythology; actually they dissolved them (proceeding with a crude etymology of their own) into physical and moralizing evaporation. Zeus is he through whom all things live, the principle of animation, he is in the universe what our souls are in us; Hera is the air, bound up with that cosmic heat, mythologically his wife and sister; products these both of the same cosmic evolution. Pluto is called so because he is enriched through the death of all living things. They really strove for a united conception which sometimes seems to be monotheistic, but which is in reality pantheistic.

[1] Cornutus (time of Nero), *Theologiae Graecae Compendium*, ch. 1.

With all this *aqua fortis* of analytical speculation the actual worship was not materially influenced or modified. It is institutional, regional, and limited, the main concern being: What shall we do? What is profitable? For a concrete illustration—and one only—let us take Philochoros, the Attic antiquarian (in a scholion on Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonos*, 1047). Apollo had a great sanctuary at Delphi and one at Delos. Supposing the state of Athens was to send a religious delegation to Delphi, the delegation, if destined for that sanctuary, would proceed as far as Oinoë, on the northern frontier of Attica. There they would stop and wait, while their mantic expert would daily sacrifice, until the victim's entrails would say: Go on to Delphi. Similarly when headed for Delos the delegation would proceed Delosward, stopping at Marathon, and there they would wait until the entrails would say: Go on to Delos. Turn the roulette until you get what is profitable.

As for Aeschylus, there was in him an affinity for that which was lofty and full of awe. The great struggles of Marathon and Salamis had added to that trend of his soul. However great and towering the might of states, dynasties or individual potentates, the anger or envy of the gods loved to raise them the higher, as the more crushing would be the blow they were designing eventually to deliver against these overtopping ones. At bottom men are not creatures of Zeus and the Olympian dynasty, but both their coming upon the earth, and especially their acquisition of material civilization, is a defiance of the gods, Prometheus earning for this the cruel tortures on the rocks of Caucasus. As far as the jealous and angry gods are concerned, mankind would still abide in primitive semi-bestial misery. Men as far

as the gods were concerned would be as Aeschylus delineates their state: "Who first, when seeing, saw in vain, and hearing, could not hear, but, comparable to shapes of dreams, at random and confusedly did mingle all, their lifelong time, nor entered homes brick-woven, warm, nor timber-work; in caverns sunk in earth they dwelled, like teeming ants in sunless nooks of caves" (Aeschylus, *Prometheus Vinctus*, 442 sqq.). Aeschylus mightily toils to endow the Olympian with veracity, equity, and justice; he rises or essays to ascend to a conception of a god universal, righteous, omnipotent (*Choëphori*, 244). But the same overgod is still beset with the legendary concupiscence and resultant wiles to conceal things from his ever-suspicious spouse, who changes the fair Io to a heifer.

As for the *Eumenides*, Apollo is there a mere counsellor at law to aid the matricide, Orestes, and cuts a poor figure in the sophistical devices of that rôle. What Aeschylus does in his conception of myth and legend Herodotus iterates in his outlook on human history and the fall of human pride. He is full of a religious awe, and the envy of the gods is the ever-recurrent *leitmotiv* of his work. "Short as this life is [VII, 46] there is not one human being so happy in his essence...to whom the thought will not present itself, oftentimes, not once only, that he would rather be dead than live. For the disasters that befall it and the diseases which confound it cause life, even though it be short, to seem long. Thus death, as life is full of burdens, has come to be the choicest refuge for man; but God, having allowed us to taste life, is found to be envious in it" (VII, 46). There were many Hamlets before Hamlet. And again (VII, 10, 5): "Thou seest how the deity strikes with the

thunderbolt those beasts that tower above their fellows, but the little ones worry him not: and you see also how his missiles always smite the largest edifices and trees of such kind.... For God does not permit anyone to entertain grand ideas but himself." As for Apollo, the "god of light," I cannot become very enthusiastic about this Olympian. The cunning devices and the vulpine doubling of the Delphian corporation in seasons of storm and stress robbed Loxias (the speaker god) of much credit, even in the very times when the Pythian priestess still mounted her tripod for the proper fee. As for Sophocles, his art by more than a chronological coincidence, in a certain perfection of form and figures, often reminds us of his contemporary Pheidias, as though nothing were underdrawn, nothing overdrawn. But in that esthetical age the cancer of Greek morals was also rife[1]. The famous dramatist wrote a play, *The Lovers of Achilles*. And we know quite abundantly that the erotic verse of Greek lyrics was largely if not exclusively directed at comely boys. Both of Sophocles and Aeschylus Athenaeus writes (XIII, 601 A): "Both Aeschylus, who was a great poet, and Sophocles brought the amatory passions upon the stage through their tragedies: the one, the love of Achilles for Patroclos, and the other (Sophocles) in his *Niobe*[2]." As for *The Lovers of Achilles*, Ovid, too, who almost more than any ancient versifier attempted to turn impurity into *belles lettres* —even he could cite this play in extenuation of his own writings:

> Nec nocet auctori, mollem qui fecit Achillem
> Infregisse suis fortia facta modis. (*Tristia*, II, 411.)

[1] Compare the Italy of Rafael and Titian, of Alexander VI and Leo X. [2] In the *Myrmidons*, fragment 135, ed. Nauck.

Is it not time at last to cast upon the dunghill that impudent fiction of an "esthetical religion," or the "religion of the beautiful"? There is, in short, no sovereign or objective law of conduct anywhere in the Greco-Roman world. The institutional or administrative treatment of the vice just referred to was, among the Greeks, more than lax. The tax on this vice was farmed out at Athens as a regular form of revenue. This chiefly was the deeper reason, in the case of the elder Cato, for his obstinate opposition to things Greek. And there was reason. The Romans indeed, we know not how early, adopted a statute called *Lex Scantinia de Infanda Venere*. In 168 B.C., at Pydna, the Macedonian kingdom fell, and the Roman soldiers, after several years of sojourning in Hellenic lands, returned to their western home. The victor's son, later known as Scipio Aemilianus, was among those who returned. Of him his counsellor and philosophical teacher, Polybius, wrote (XXXII, 11):

> The first impulse and emulation for noble ideals that kindled his soul, was to acquire the reputation of continence, and to excel in this sphere those of his own time of life. This wreath, great and hard to attain [of itself] was easy to gain at that period.

But why?

> On account of the onset of most men for the worse. For some of the young men [*scil.* of the Roman aristocracy] were in a passion of dissoluteness, some directed at boys, others at courtesans, others were devoted to the entertainment of the ear, and drinking bouts, and waste of money in such pursuits, having quickly seized the laxity of the Greeks for this particular sphere, in the war with Perseus. And so great a dissoluteness had fallen upon the young men in connection with such pursuits that many paid as much as a talent for a boy concubine.

In Sophocles (as in the Prometheus of Hesiod and of Aeschylus) all human civilization and conquest of the

earth is still conceived as a defiance and bold invasion on the part of man. "Even though he tame and subdue all creatures to his use and profit, though he has devised speech and his conceits ride on the wings of the wind, though he has acquired the instinct for civil institutions, and his substantial domicile cares naught for hoar-frost or pelting rain-showers, in short, though he be all-devising [v, 360] of Hades only he will never devise an escape" (*Antigone*, 335 sqq.). In his old age the same dramatist wrote as follows:

> Not to have come into being at all, this is the triumphant position in the whole range of discourse: and the other, namely, when man has appeared, that he should go to that bourne whence he came, as speedily as possible, this is easily second. For when youth comes on, bearing frivolous follies, who can swerve from the course of many troubles? Who is not within travail? Murders, riots, jealousy, contentions, and envy. And by lot comes last old age, invalid, unsociable, unloved, where universal troubles are housed with troubles."
>
> (*Oedipus at Colonos*, 1225 sqq.)

Euripides lived in a day when dialectic and rhetoric found at Athens a rare field for practice and growth. He could not introduce any new plots or themes into his plays. But he, deeply cogitative and fearlessly contentious of spirit, found it desperately difficult to endow the legends of Greece with any spiritual meaning whatsoever. His heroes, and heroines too, are in the main Attic doubters and debaters on all things, whether human or divine. Note this moral puzzle of the misery of the Trojan war (*Helena*, 1137): "What is God or not-God or the intermediate substance, which of mortal men will say that he has discovered the widest comprehension, who beholds the matters of the Gods bounding hither and thither in fates contradictory and unhoped

for?" The maiden Makaria (*Heraclidae*, 591) hopes that there may be nothing after death: "Let these things be for me precious things in place of children and virgin espousal, if there is anything underground, still, my hope is there may be nothing: for if even there we mortals, destined to die, are to have tribulations, I do not know whither one shall turn: for to die is held to be the greatest physic for evils." The way men fare here in this world on our earth does indeed seem to contradict the faith in any divine rule or regency: "If the gods had understanding and wisdom in human way a double meed of bloom of youth, conspicuous seal of their goodness would all those bear off, who have of the latter: but after death again into the beams of the sun they would go, traversing double span of life. But ill-birth would have but a single span of life," etc. (*Hercules Furens*, 655). Thereby the earth in time would indeed become a place of clear cleavage among men. After all, the earth we see must be its own heaven. It is one of the deepest convictions of our Christian hope that these things about us here are no finality, no consummation. Further on in the same play (1314): "No mortal is in fortunes by the fates unharmed, no god, *if singer's sayings not mendacious are*. Did they not couch together in a way no law permits? Did they not cast in chains disgraceful[1] their own fathers, for the sake of autocratic sway? But still Olympus is their domicile and they endured the consciousness of sin." But, as I said, the soul of Euripides was Janus-faced, one viewing and weighing the national traditions and the ancestral legends, and the other denying and rejecting them. Thus (*Hercules Furens*, 1345): "I neither hold that the

[1] Zeus, Kronos.

gods love couches that Justice would prohibit, and that they clap fetters on hands I neither have held a proper thing to credit nor will I ever be persuaded that one god has become the master of another. For God [ὁ Θεός], if indeed he is rightly God, is in need of nothing[1], these are the wretched tales of poets."

Chastity was no moral postulate in the Hellenic world at large; when met, however, it was to them a startling and utterly remarkable phenomenon, a *prodigium*. Eros[2] is indeed the autocrat of gods and men, and he is malignant in this, that he emphasizes comeliness, but often leaves the lovers in the lurch of their own passion. Love "loves to rule the worst part of our minds[3]." No worshipper is greater or better than his gods. It strikes us as uncouth or incongruous that the Hippolytus presents Kypris and Artemis as two forces equally divine, clearly unchastity vastly stronger than the goddess of Chastity, these in the play maintaining a curious neutrality. Hippolytus has a virgin soul (1007), but his tragic death is half explained by his stubbornness and pride. One cannot, in all fairness, avoid the general conclusion of this play, that it is folly to resist these appetites; there is simply no highway or path whatever from this law in the members to the other one, uttered by St Paul (1 Cor. vi, 19): "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" Here we remember the noted saying of Friedrich Paulsen, viz. that Christianity was not an evolution, but the greatest revolution known to the records of men.

[1] Acts xvii, 25: "Neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything."

[2] Fragment 132.

[3] Fragment 139.

Two noble utterances remain, which must find a place here before we take leave of this spiritual and deeply searching soul: "Truly, when I grasp the faith in divine government, then anxious pain departs. But the desire of my faith to find a ruling providence is wrecked as soon as I contemplate the deeds and suffering of humankind" (*Hippolytus*, 1104). And then that fundamental evil, the conflict between the correct insight and the weak will of man: "For otherwise before on night's long couch have I reflected what it is that ruins human life. And 'tis not from the essence of their reason, so it seems to me, that men in conduct fail. For many have clear understanding. For thus I think this must be viewed. The good we know and grasp it with our mind, but toil not hard for it; some from indolence, some, rating higher some pleasure than the good" (*Hippolytus*, 374).

This true observation will admirably conduct us to the central thought of Socrates, compatriot and of the same generation with Euripides. While Socrates sharply chided Kritias for the pursuit of unnatural lust, and while he defied the seductive wickedness of that ancient apostle of freedom, Alcibiades, he in some ways rose not at all above the current morality of his own folk and his own day[1]. There was in Athens an hetaera, Theodote, whose comeliness was the talk of the town[2]. Socrates and some of his followers visited her household. The woman's mother was present. A painter was painting her portrait, to make her beauty more widely known. What did Socrates discourse upon with his disciples? What such a woman must do with a view

[1] Plato, *Symposion*, 216 sqq.
[2] Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, III, 11, 1.

toward material ends and advantages, how to look, how to converse, to sympathize, how to deal with the insolent suitor, in a word, how to protract and maintain the relation. On the other hand, it must not be omitted from this narrow survey that he prayed[1] to the gods simply to give him *the good*, as the gods best knew what kind of things really were good; but those who prayed for gold or silver or for the power of a prince, he held, prayed for something that differed in nowise from throwing dice or from battle. The central thought of his philosophy, however, was this: At bottom an absolutely clear and true concept of things, perfect knowledge indeed, was automatically and intrinsically bound up with its corollary, viz. right action; that the intellect, if right, will dominate and sway the will and the conduct of man toward right and righteousness. All wrong action then simply was due to wrong conception and faulty knowledge. The actual man cannot be measured by that great though noble error.

The greatest of his pupils, Plato, is no less great as a master of letters than where he combines the logic of Socrates with the soul-theories of the Pythagoreans. Our souls, as they now are, have fallen from their primeval estate in the realm of ideas, forms of truth absolute, shapes of bliss and perfection, non-spatial, non-material[2], and still the only real truth, nay, the only reality, because the organic world which we know in this bodily life is ever passing and ever tending toward death. Incarnation, we saw, is a grave deterioration of being. Metempsychosis is the process and routine of soul-life; there is really no eschatology, no consummation, no finality, but the cycle begins ever

[1] Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, I, 3, 2. [2] Plato, *Symposion*, 211 A.

anew. I need not even add what is obvious, viz. that the philosopher is the highest form of incarnation. Plato's most esoteric wisdom is for a small élite, for the wise. The poor, the uncultured, the slaves are not even within his ken. Indeed, when one has traversed the thought and feats and potency of the ancient world, a cramping and benumbing feeling creeps over us. We think of Milton's lines:

> Since by strength
> They measure all, of other excellence not emulous.

By contrast we may very fairly urge that decisive symbol and function of the Messiah, "*Pauperes evangelizantur*": "The poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matt. xi, 5). And so Plato's ethics, too, are aristocratic; an élite of philosophical souls must rule political society, this class always maintained at a point of excellence by a process and method of special choice, in which physical and moral eugenics are alone considered and in which the institution of the family disappears. The underlying theory is that the overwhelming mass of mankind are hopelessly vulgar and disqualified for the excellence, power, and felicity reserved for the élite. In a way it is a system too largely or chiefly transcendental. The philosopher's soul, if thrice it chose that life, passes (forever) into that divine contemplation of the world of ideas. "But the other souls, when they have completed the first life, get their judgment, and having received their verdict some pass into the places under earth where justice is carried out and there *they pay the penalty* [δίκην ἐκτίνουσιν]; and others are raised by Justice into a certain locality of the heavens and lead a life worthy of that life which they have lived in human shape" (Plato, *Phaedrus*,

249 A sqq.)[1]. Reincarnation ever follows, and everything depends on the fresh choice of lives. "Responsibility was of him who chose. God was without responsibility."

Plato's higher metaphysic, then, in its spiritual earnestness approaches the sphere of religion, but it bans and scorns the multitude and in the end definitely declines to set up any new or purer religion even. The institutional forms of worship indeed must be upheld, whether of the gods (of current tradition) or of the lesser powers called *daimones* and heroes (nowadays called supermen). And so in the *Laws*, the work of his old age, he returns as it were to a certain conformity with Attic religion. "First, we say, in allotting honours, viz. those after the Olympians and those gods which hold the commonwealth[2], to the gods of the lower world, allotting the proper meed, the second, and the left honours, such a one would most correctly attain the goal of piety....And after these gods the sensible person would also go through the ritual to the *daimones*, and to the heroes after these" (Plato, *Leges*, 717 A sqq.). After these, the parents. It is altogether a body of civil obligations and family duties. But in Plato there dwelled as it were two souls, the Athenian and that of the philosopher. And to the latter belongs the verdict of last appeal[3]: "At bottom, then, all these generations and ranks of Greek gods are undergods and creatures [themselves] of the One Eternal and Uncreated" (Plato, *Timaeus*, 41 A). To the Olympians then he who begat this universe speaks as follows:

[1] These thoughts are elaborated in the vision of the Armenian Er, *Republic*, 614 B, 599.

[2] As, *e.g.*, Hera at Argos, Athena at Athens, Helios at Rhodes, etc.

[3] Cf. the writer's *Testimonium Animae*, p. 236.

Ye gods of gods, whose creator I am and father of their works, which, having come to pass through me are indissoluble, if I will not. That, then, which at one time was bound, is all soluble, but it is the part of an evil one to wish to dissolve that which was well fitted together and is in a fair state; wherefore, also, *since you have come to be, immortal indeed you are not, nor indissoluble at all*, still you are in no wise to be dissolved nor will you obtain the lot of death, since you got by lot my will, to wit, a bond greater still and more sovereign than those elements with which you were bound up when you came into being.

No profound exegesis is required to grasp what Plato meant to say, viz. that the Olympians are merely the well-ordered cosmic forces and physical phenomena under which mankind now lives.

The ideas and the transcendent features of the Platonic system, apart from his splendid writings, did not endure long. The Academic School indeed, as a system or sequence of tenets, soon turned away from its founder and after awhile devoted itself mainly to analyzing the conditions of knowledge, with a strong vein of scepticism, as in Carneades.

Aristotle strove, as no man before or since has striven, to comprehend this world in which we live, its physical base, its cosmic order, but no less the culture and institutions of our humankind. No single intellect with so universal and so enduring approbation of men (as his) ever directed itself to solve and understand almost the whole sphere of human interests. Of his theory of God we must not speak lightly, keeping in mind that the scholastic theologians of the Middle Ages, from Albert the Great and from Thomas Aquinas onward, incorporated some of his theology with their own. His god is a part of his metaphysics, an element in his effort to understand the origin of life and movement and the

cosmic order. His thinking compels him not to admit any infinite or indefinite regression of causes in the life and history of the universe. Design and purpose determined the value of all things, and the same is the final and essential thing in our operations of thought and intelligence. There must be, and there must be conceived to be, a *primum movens* (πρῶτον κινοῦν)[1], a First Cause, or First Originator, of life and movement, a Force, or Power, which is not moved or determined by something outside itself. This Aristotle calls God. His essence is pure activity or production or energy; he is eternal, while the material of the universe is no less eternal. He is non-material, unchangeable, and not subject to impression or affection (ἀπαθής), unlimited and indefinable. "Aristotle combines the immanence of God with his transcendental[2] character" (Schwegler). The cosmic order and the phenomena of organic life reveal him in this particular, that everything is adjusted to end and design. Thus, too, his goodness is perceived. In Aristotle's way of thinking *goodness* and *adjustment to design* are almost convertible terms.

The beatitude of God is largely the state of contemplation in which God realizes his highest functions and his highest pleasure, and which is largely directed at himself, the sole perfection. The activity of God is intelligence. God is either intelligence or something beyond intelligence[3]. "God does not purpose to do the evil things, while indeed he does possess the potency to do the same" (*Topica*, IV, p. 126 a, 35). Aristotle sharply rejects the doctrines of Democritus, who had

[1] *De Physica Auscultatione*, p. 256 a, 5 sqq.

[2] τὸ θεῖον φύσις χωριστὴ καὶ ἀκίνητος, *Metaphysic*, X, 7, p. 1064 a, 35.

[3] Fragment 46.

essayed a purely mechanical and material explanation of the universe and banished design from this explanation, being the sire of modern positivism and its present sectaries. He ridicules the shallow contentment of that school with phenomena, as if these contained and constituted truth.

But to return to the Stagirite himself. One cannot quite rid oneself of the impression or inference that the Aristotelian god is to some degree an abstraction from, or a creature of, the great thinker and scientist's personal ideals, incentives, and activities. It would be folly to pray to, or to seek any relation with such a god. It is, as I have said elsewhere[1], an academic and cosmic god, but singularly and utterly severed from human beings by his essence. There cannot be any affection, Aristotle holds, directed towards God or gods, for friendship postulates a certain measure of equality; the gods so utterly exceed men in all good things that there cannot be any friendship between them and men. "God so loved the world, that—" must have impressed the cultured Greeks of Paul's time, as it must still so impress the modern Democriteans, as a wild fancy, as foolishness, in a word.

The ethics of the great analyst may be fairly designated as a system of psychological mapping and statics. The idea of *duty* has not as yet been discovered. Ἀρετή, as elsewhere in Hellenic speech, means chiefly some form of excellence of efficiency, and it varies greatly according to sex, age or occupation. Even the thief and the blackmailer have their specific ἀρετή. Aristotle's "ethical virtue," therefore, is no tautology. It is in his theory the middle point between extremes,

[1] *Testimonium Animae*, p. 243.

as gentleness is midway between stolidity and irascibility, bravery the mean between cowardice and rashness, and so forth. As for slavery, Aristotle defends it. There are certain human beings whose intrinsic inferiority by a parity of reasoning is as manifest as is the relation of the body to the soul, as beast to man, beings whose sole function is bodily, whose soul-possession, we may fairly add, is negligible or as nothing (*Politics*, I, 5).

"*Pauperes evangelizantur*" once more. Of reformer or prophet there is no trace in the great analyst. He, too, was *of* the world, largely that of Philip and Alexander of Macedon, not less than that of his aged teacher, Plato of Athens, and not merely *in* that world. Exposure of children[1] is entirely a matter of convenience. Nay (*Politics*, VII, 16), if pregnancy occurs contrary to the fixed number convenient to the interest of the given commonwealth, then abortion must be performed.

As for the Greek vice, Aristotle (*Politics*, II, 10) does not hesitate to ascribe it to Minos as a deliberate and primeval institution of Crete to limit the population. Aristotle clearly is callous here. "And they plotted also against Periander the Autocrat of Ambracia, because he while drinking with his boy concubine asked him, whether he was already pregnant by himself" (*Politics*, V, 10). Aristotle owed much to King Philip, he owed still more to Philip's son Alexander. But he did not forbear (*loc. cit.*) to refer to the assassination of Philip at the hands of Pausanias, "because Philip let him [Pausanias]

[1] As daily, or nightly, practised at Athens. Χυτρίζειν, "*to put into the jar*," was the current term for the killing of infants. Cf. Scholia on Aristophanes' *Frogs*, 1221.

be treated with ignominy by Attalos and his circle." Aristotle's readers knew why. The whole nauseous story is found in *Diodorus*, XVI, 93 sq. Aristotle's God had no relation to his conscience, nor to any spiritual hope, nor to his conduct. It was a very splendid element in his metaphysic, but otherwise of no influence on his soul, no more than an asteroid or a star in Ursa Major or Aquarius.

My space is at an end. I have not referred to Stoicism, the ethics of which among academic folk is often placed close to that of Christianity. It is a great subject, but would require special treatment. To it the next chapter is devoted.

CHAPTER II

STOICISM AND CHRISTIANITY

NOTE. The following have been used in the preparation of the subjoined study: *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta, collegit* F. von Arnim, 3 vols., 1903, 1905. Diogenes Laertius, Book VII. L. Annaeus Seneca, ed. Hase, 1871. Epictetus, ed. H. Schenkl, editio minor, 1898; my references are to the pages of that edition. Marcus Aurelius, ed. Stich, 1882; here, too, the pages of that edition are cited. *M. Cornelii Frontonis et M. Aurelii Imperatoris Epistolae*, ed. Naber, 1867. *Iulii Capitolini M. Ant. Philosophus* (in *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, ed. H. Peter, 1865). The *First Apology* of Justin Martyr, ed. Gildersleeve, 1877. Celsus, ed. Th. Keim, 1873. The *Octavius* of Minucius Felix, ed. Halm, 1867. Zeller, *Stoics*, etc., transl. by Reichel, 1892. Cassius Dio, ed. Dindorf, 1864, Epitome of Book LXXI. Th. Zahn, *Der Stoiker Epiktet und sein Verhaeltniss zum Christenthum*, Erlangen, 1894. Doellinger, *Judenthum und Heidenthum*, 1857. (The English translation has long been out of print.) "L. Annaeus Seneca, the Versatile, and the Rome of Seneca," chapter XVIII in *Testimonium Animae*, 1908, New York, by E. G. Sihler. Article "Pantheismus," in Herzog's *Realencyclopaedie*, by H. Ulrici.

IN my first chapter I presented an outline of classical civilization, in its spiritual aspects, and I summed this up as failure. I said but little of Stoicism. Now, that body of thought and that system of ethical axioms hold and always have held a certain pre-eminence with many moralists. A book by an English latter day deist (J. A. Farrer, 1892 and later) has *aperto ore* challenged the sovereignty of Christianity both in the domain of morals and of religion. It is a somewhat belated product, I take it, of the deism of Toland, Tindal, and Gibbon, exceptionally fanatical in its hatred of Chris-

tianity, and quite absurd also when viewed from the standpoint of sober and critical scholarship. Farrer's enthusiasm (and versified paeans) for Epicurus, Seneca, Epictetus, M. Aurelius I cannot share, because I know these too well. As for Farrer's commendation of pagan idolatry coupled with the well-worn injection of an exegesis of higher meanings, I cannot take this seriously, because these allegories are as old as Zeno and Chrysippus, and quite as stale.

In a period of some fifty years of classical study, with unswerving devotion I have striven to gather and appreciate whatever spiritual elements could be met or traced in the recorded and transmitted utterances of the classical world. I am deeply convinced that those who would understand the history of Christianity should possess more than a few generalizations or commonplaces—dry leaves from herbaria, often passed on from manual to manual, from compilation to compilation, from commentary to commentary, and often also, it must be said, from sermon to sermon. We are living in a time when Greek is disappearing, with appalling swiftness, from our liberal education. The time, indeed, to speak seriously, is not far away when those responsible for, or who are patrons of, the teaching of divinity and Biblical learning must safeguard that essential prerequisite, Greek, somehow and somewhere; for the New Testament and its cultural and historical setting are certainly fully as needful for the highest welfare of mankind as are triphammers, microscopes, steel, oil, gas, and coal. Even somewhat more so, we dare say. Who will gainsay this?

When St Paul came down from Philippi, from Amphipolis and Apollonia, to Thessalonica and to Beroea,

he took ship and sailed for the Piraeus (Acts xvii). At Athens he was impressed (cf. Pausanias, 1) with the exceptional vastness of figures reared for pagan worship. Poor Paul! he evidently lacked the proper requisites for archaeological appreciation and probably failed to feel the esthetical rapture of mandatory ecstasy so often inculcated by the diluted humanism of later times. He was indeed strongly stirred (*θεωροῦντος κατείδωλον οὖσαν τὴν πόλιν*). But Athens was then also what she had been since the days of Plato and Aristotle, the central point, the metropolis, of Greek philosophy. Here the schools called Academic, Peripatetic, Stoic, and Epicurean still had regular chief professors, transmitting system, doctrine, and polemic from generation to generation, leaders who as a rule were born at a considerable distance from the renowned but now quiet and mainly academic town, born, I say, at some point far away within the vast periphery which quite properly we call not the Hellenic but the Hellenistic world. And it is, further, in entire harmony with our knowledge of the history of Greek thought, that these two schools, the Epicurean and the Stoic, are specifically named (in Acts xvii) as those which came into contact (*συνέβαλλον*) with Paul. They had a vitality and a wide acceptance greatly surpassing the others. Academic leaders, these, of the world of that time, before whom Paul proclaimed the faith in the God who made the universe and all there is in it (Acts xvii, 24), that He dwelt not in temples made with hands, that He was self-sufficing, that it was He who gave to all life and breath and everything, that all mankind was of one original stock, and that He was not far from each one of us, and before whom he cited from the exordium of Aratos: *Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν.*

If the Stoics of the university who heard him had been theists they would have felt some positive affinity for these theses. It was some three hundred and fifty years before that Zeno of Kition in Cyprus had established his school in Athens, in the Painted Porch by the Market. In the main, however, Paul's message was to the Greeks who sought wisdom (ἐπειδή καὶ Ἕλληνες σοφίαν ζητοῦσιν, 1 Cor. i, 22), foolishness (μωρία, 1 Cor. i, 18).

Let us now look more closely at certain fundamental tenets of the school of Zeno, Kleanthes, Chrysippus, Panaetius, Seneca, Epictetus, and the imperial Stoic. At bottom the Stoics were no less materialists than the followers of Democritus and of Epicurus, for everything, they held, which affects an object, and everything which is affected, must needs be corporeal; and in their larger and fundamental conception they held that cause and matter were the two prime factors of the universe. It seemed to them a simple exchange of terms to call that cause, or formative principle, God. "Matter lies inert, a something ready for anything, if none stir it" (Seneca, *Epistolae*, LXV, 2). Everything that really *is* must be material, or some form of matter. Now that power or force which organized matter was heat, or fire, a creative but essentially physical agency, immanent in matter and interpenetrating it and bearing within itself, nay, being itself, the creative reason (λόγος σπερματικός), containing within itself the germ or germination of all organic life and the causes of all that has happened, is now happening, and is going to happen; and the interdependence and sequence of these are *fate* and *knowledge* and *truth* and *law*, absolute and defying escape for all being. By this all things in the universe were administered exceedingly well, as in some civil

polity enjoying the best laws (Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, xv, p. 816)[1]. Some day this universe will be dissolved in heat, and heat alone will remain: "God will take everything back into himself." Then this gaseous substance, by a process of cooling, will once more produce the four elements in their sequential metamorphosis; the germ, reason, will resume its activity, everything will come forth once more in a fresh process of life and reason. These cycles have been from eternity, and they will follow each other into all eternity —creation and dissolution of the same cosmic and divine substance, forever and ever.

Now this universe, the Stoics held, is divine, for God is the universe and these are convertible terms. This then is a system of pantheism. The universe is one being, it is animate and rational, endowed with the faculty of perception. They gained this not so much by scientific speculation as by abstract reasoning, as thus: "A living being is better, more efficient, than a non-living being; nothing is better than the universe; therefore the universe must be a living being. And it is animate, as is clear from our vitality being a detached particle (ἀπόσπασμα) of the universe" (Diogenes Laertius, vii, 143). Mind and reason permeate the universe, as our own vitality permeates ourselves. We are a part, then, of the universe and therefore (*sic*) there is something divine in us also. We are an articulation of, are associated with, this divine universe ("et socii eius sumus et membra," Seneca, *Epistolae*, xcii, 30). It is curious to see how this all-pervading animation, the material organic heat, is claimed to be at the same time rational, the source of thought, nay, wisdom and law

[1] ed. Heinichen.

itself, with which we are bound up, if only we recognize this dependence as we ought. We may, therefore, we can, reason from ourselves to the universe or God, and from the latter back to ourselves again, *ad libitum*; their favourite term, however, is nature (φύσις).

As for Seneca indeed, the dramatist, orator, advocate, brilliant stylist, essayist, student of nature, man of the world and reader in the closet, contemporary of St Paul, educator of Nero, administrator for some years of the Roman Empire, satirist, moralist, courtier, admirer of the simple life of the Cynics and still possessor of fabulous wealth—his Stoicism often reminds us of the iridescence of certain brightly plumaged birds, whose crests, according as the sun's rays strike them so or so, now appear as gold, now mauve, now violet. The famous Corduban, I say, sometimes appears a genuine Stoic and consistent sectary, and again his penetration of soul concerns attains a dignity and profundity of utterance which seems indeed almost to preclude anything but distinctly theistic, nay, Christian, conceptions, rising positively above the ether, or hot breath, of Zeno or Chrysippus, and above the cosmic mechanism of his own school. We are sometimes reminded of St Paul's words on the Areopagus: "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him [grope, ἐπιψηλαφήσειαι], and find him, though he be not far away from every one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts xvii, 27, 28).

Let us look then at the curious Janus-faces in Seneca's utterance, curious because he is a sectary of pantheism, and still he often seems to aspire, at least, to theism. "It is a great consolation [*sic*] to be whirled along [*rapi*] with the universe." "Whatever it is that has ordered

us so to live, so to die, by the same necessity it binds the gods also. An irrevocable course carries along human and divine affairs equally. He himself, the founder and ruler of all, has once indeed written the fates, but he follows. Always he obeys, once he has issued his orders" (*Prov.* v, 8). "The world also, embracing all things, and the ruler of the universe, God [He is identical with the world], strives indeed for outward things, but nevertheless entirely from everywhere returns unto himself" (in the ἐκπύρωσις of the Stoics, *De Vita Beata*, viii, 4). "Whoever was the moulder of the universe, whether he is that God and powerful over all, or incorporal reason, craftsman of stupendous works, or a divine breath spread through all the greatest and smallest things, with equal energy; or Fate and an immutable series of interdependent causes" (*Ad Helviam*, viii, 3). "The mind, viewer and admirer of the world, most magnificent part of it" (*ib.* viii, 4). "For what else is Nature, but God and divine reason injected into the universe and the parts thereof" (*De Beneficiis*, iv, 7, 1). "Nor is Nature without God, nor God without Nature, but both are the same [*idem est utrumque*]... thus now call it Nature, Fate, Fortune, all are names of the same God using his powers in various ways" (*ib.* iv, 8, 2–3). "Whether the universe is a soul, or a body governable by Nature" (*Naturales Quaestiones*, iii, 29, 2). "He [God], makes himself, before all things" (*Fragmenta*, 15). Now for the other, loftier side of Seneca's thought. "To obey God is Freedom" (*De Vita Beata*, xv, 7), "driving out the greed for another's possession, from which rises every evil of the soul" (*De Clementia*, ii, 1, 4). "If you imitate the gods, bestow benefactions even upon the ungrateful: for even

for the criminal the sun arises, and for pirates the seas are expanded (*De Beneficiis*, IV, 26, 1). "Now could a law be set for showers that were to fall, that they should not flow down upon the fields of the evil and wicked" (*ib.* IV, 28, 3). How to combat anger: "Nor will anything be more wholesome than thinking of your own mortality" (*De Ira*, III, 42, 2). "Should anyone nurse anger? Challenge him with acts of kindness" (*ib.* II, 34, 5). "That I should persist praising the life, not which I lead, but which I know I ought to lead, and follow, even at a mighty distance, crawling as it were" (*De Vita Beata*, XVIII, 2). "Sins do not wait in one spot, but restless and at odds with one another they are in an uproar: they charge and are routed in turn: but the same confession we will always have to make of us, that evil we are, evil we have been, and, unwillingly I must add, evil we shall be" (*De Beneficiis*, I, 10, 3). "Nobody knows God, many conceive him meanly, and with impunity" (*Epistolae*, XXXI, 10). "Oh, when will you see that time, when you will know that *Time* has nothing more to do with your being?" (*ib.* XXXII, 4). On the conscience: "A sacred spirit is seated within us, an observer of good and evil, and a guardian. As he has been treated by us, so he himself treats us" (*ib.* XLI, 2). "A good conscience defies the mob, an evil one even in solitude is troubled and distressed" (*ib.* XLIII, 5). "What avails it to have something kept from a human being? Nothing is barred to God. He attends our minds, and drops right into the midst of our reflections" (*ib.* LXXXIII, 1). Sir William Ramsay even thinks Seneca knew something of the Gospel. I do not think so. Let us proceed.

As to life and conduct, the Stoics laid down the rule,

from Zeno onward, that man follow nature, or the universe, or God—*sequere deum*! to live conformably to "nature" (ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει ζῆν). They interpreted and injected into this "nature" every possible moral perfection. As a matter of fact, their "nature," like their pantheistic "God," was an abstraction of their sect, a creation of their school. Nowhere else did they so utterly ignore, nay, stand on its head, that *testimonium animae*, which both the broad experience of our race, as well as the honest voice of the individual conscience, is bound ever to attest. There is a chasm between the Stoic "nature" and the actual one, which even the most fervid declamations and protestations of your radical deist will find it difficult to bridge over. The empiric truth, indeed, of the ages here confounds human pride, and from the unfathomable potentiality of sin (which honest and sincere men will and must designate as hereditary sin) ever comes forth the actual and concrete lapse. Jesus knew what He did when, in that simplest and that most comprehensive prayer of spiritual needs and spiritual conditions, He gave a place to that petition which is known as the sixth: "And lead us not into temptation." Or is there any one born of woman whose spiritual strength and confidence makes, for him, this element in the Lord's Prayer dispensable? Where is he? As for the brilliant Corduban, he, too, like all genuine Stoics, lights up his pages with the wonderful perfections borne by the sage alone, invincible by men or misfortune. Alone truly good, ready to defy mankind, whom no one can really injure, even though they slay him, content with himself, whose state is the world, who has no needs, all ages wait upon him as a divine being. He never changes his purpose,

is utterly devoid of emotions, hoping nothing, desiring nothing. "There is something in which the sage excels God" (the pantheist's God); "the latter owes his fearlessness to nature, the sage to himself" (*Epistolae*, LIII, 11). It has always been so; in pantheism man is the apex of all, in whom only (cf. Hegel) that divinity becomes conscious. Such are the antinomies of human wisdom. One voice: "Be as God! Humanity [as in Compte] is the only God." The other voice: "Get down on all fours, like Nebuchadnezzar; reduce yourself to your essential beasthood, and get your true, your primeval meaning for the γνῶθι σεαυτόν of that Delphic monition."

There was some common clay in Seneca's composition. He rings the changes in his vindictive reminiscences of Caligula, who once came near destroying the brilliant orator. Seneca's satire on Claudius was inspired in the main by revenge. Claudius once exiled him to Corsica. Finally Seneca, lending his pleader's power and his brilliant pen to justify or defend the imperial matricide, Nero—this is simply an awful incident in his public life. No John the Baptist he. Seneca's brilliantly sententious pages do indeed mirror and rebuke the decadence of his times with searching ethical acumen far beyond the more coarse and superficial rhetorical indignation of the later Juvenal. That Neronian age, I say, is stripped naked by the pen of the famous moralist, but his contemporaries naturally felt more vividly than we do the worldly side of his career and pointed to his thirteen millions (in our standard; Tacitus, *Annals*, XIII, 42) and the six hundred tables of citrus wood with ivory feet. They did not, in fact, take the brilliant satirist and moralist quite as seriously

as he took himself. Thus, too, Tacitus, one of the keenest analysts of character known to literature, is very cool and reserved in dealing with that character and that life.

But we must in fairness, cast more than a glance at one or two further elements in Stoic ethics, elements highly commendable in themselves. What is the aim and end (τὸ τέλος) of life and living? Only those things which "are in our power" (τὰ ἐφ' ἡμῖν), the things in which the onset of our will (ὁρμή, προαίρεσις) is directed at mental, moral things, soul-boons; in a word, those things which are good and wholesome to the inner man. What actual men mainly pursue, wealth, pleasure, honour, are either evil or at least indifferent (ἀδιάφορα or *fortuita*). These are the body of worldly quests, which prove noxious to the average man. Among these *adiaphora* the consistent Stoics (who prided themselves on their rigid consistency) placed even health and death. Calm, a soul unruffled (ἀταραξία), is in fact the great end of life, for I need not say they had no transcendental hope. Here, too, they analyzed with keen psychological insight, and reprobated, all passions and emotions (cf. von Arnim, *Fragmenta Stoicorum*, III, 92–133). These, all of them, even pity or mercy, are weaknesses of the soul, which must not merely be controlled but uprooted, for they are disloyal and disobedient to that which is the sovereign element or dominant power (τὸ ἡγεμονικόν) in man, to wit, reason. Such are cupidity, fear, grief, pleasure, all proceeding from wrong mental images (φαντασίαι) and directing the onset of our will at those things which are not within the purview of soul-concerns. Here further belong (*ib.* p. 96 sq.) wrath or anger in all its forms,

bitterness, hatred, grudge, sexual passion, yearning, ill-will, a sense of want, feuds, fondness of pleasure, covetousness, ambition, gluttony, ebriety, even excessive fondness of life. For the Stoics, as the hierophants of freedom and absolute self-determination, made suicide, in certain circumstances, an integral part of their ethics, particularly when hemmed in by tyrants. "Wherever you look, there is an end of troubles. Do you see the precipice? There is a descent to freedom. Do you see that sea, that river, that cistern? Freedom there abides at the bottom. Do you see your neck, your throat, your heart? They are modes of escape from slavery" (Seneca, *De Ira*, v, 15, 4). It was this practical assertion of freedom which endowed with a peculiar renown some of the members of the Roman aristocracy under Claudius, Nero, and Domitian. And the same Pliny who extolled these was also, as governor of Bithynia and supreme justice of that province, so rigorous in dealing with the poor Christians brought before his tribunal (*Epistolae*, x, 96), the emperor's representative who calmly sent them to execution simply because he resented their obstinacy, when they refused to worship the idol of Trajan, and who applied the torture to two deaconesses to ascertain more exactly their religious belief, which he sums up as "*superstitionem pravam immodicam.*"

It was about this time that there flourished, at Nicopolis in Epirus, Epictetus, once a slave of Nero's freedman Epaphroditus, trained, through the latter's kindly interest, as a Stoic, in Rome, by Musonius Rufus, and ultimately, under Domitian, expelled with all the philosophers from Rome and from Italy. Epictetus has been greatly extolled as a lofty moralist.

He taught Stoicism under Trajan and Hadrian for his material support, but even more he seems to have acted toward a great many individuals as a kind of spiritual counsellor and confessor. My illustrations are mainly from Arrian's records of his discourses and monitions. While Epictetus was indeed a Stoic, he was far from being a mere exegete and scholastic. Very often, indeed, he seems to rise to a positively theistic conception, which cannot well be reared on purely Stoic pantheism and materialism. When Arrian knew him he was an old man, and lame. "Epictetus the Lame, said the enemy of Christianity, Celsus (Keim, p. 115), was a moral hero in suffering his lame leg, and therein superior to Jesus on the cross." To Arrian he once said: "What shall I, an old man, do, but praise God?" But this, which we may call his personal quasi-theistic aspiration and afflatus, existed, like two chestnuts in one burr, side by side with the pantheism and the spiritual pride and self-sufficiency of his school and sect, where the supreme court and the judge of last resort is the *ego*. If St Paul's sweeping judgment had been presented to his attention: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii, 23), he would have protested, for himself, against such a classification. Or this (Rom. vii, 18 sq.): "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. viii, 7).

Now for Epictetus. If only we hold on to our

rational and dominant element, all is well (p. 126, ed. Schenkl). All we need is practice and training in accordance with the right reason (*ib.*). "For in the course of long time we have been habituated to do the opposite and hold as practical assumptions those which are contrary to the right." A proper course in psychological analysis (*sic*) will rectify all that. By our original and fundamental design we are indeed good. We must conserve ourselves (p. 126) as we are by our intrinsic nature, viz. reverential, faithful, lofty, not liable to be dazed, free from emotion, free from disturbance. I cannot (p. 127), like Zeus, be unageing and immortal, "but I can die divinely, endure sickness divinely. These things I possess. These things I can do. I will show you the sinews of a philosopher." To admit fundamental sinfulness would have been, in his eyes, a denial of the divine reason, or nature, of which man's soul is a detached part (*σὺ ἀπόσπασμα εἶ θεοῦ*, p. 125). So he often speaks of the "will of nature," and "to follow the will of nature" (*παρακολουθεῖν τῷ βουλήματι τῆς φύσεως*). Our own nature is also the nature of the universe (p. 69). He denies the axiom of Epicurus, that man by nature is set to pursue his advantage; it is from this vicious axiom that there have arisen wars, revolutions, usurpation, conspiracies (p. 72). "This is a law of nature and of God, that the better shall always overcome the worse" (p. 93). "Our nature is to be faithful, but the adulterer destroys this design" (p. 112). Epictetus admits that "women are common by nature" (*ib.*), but the adulterer, instead of a human being, is a wolf or an ape (p. 113). "What is the strongest among men, nature, dragging us (*ἕλκουσα*) toward her own will, even against man's will and with man groan-

ing" (p. 177). "There is a law of nature, that the better man shall have the advantage over the worse" (p. 254).

I shall now present a number of his utterances, where pantheism and theism (at least a quasi-personal conception) seem to follow each other in a puzzling manner. "If thou followest him who administers the universe, and bearest him about in yourself, do you still hanker after jewels and artistic marble?" (p. 257). In moral struggle "remember God, call upon him as aid and assistant" (p. 168). Duty fulfilled, I may say to God: "I have not, I dare say, transgressed (*παρέβην*) your commands. Have I used my mental faculties aright?" (p. 223). "We must not find fault with his administration" (*ib.*). "If God wills me to have fever, I too will it" (p. 328). Zeus made you one endowed with the faculty of endurance (*ὑπομενητικόν*), endowed with a lofty soul (p. 231), "what then shall befall?" "As God wills" (p. 263). "To raise your hands in death to God, and say that you have been faithful in perceiving his administration and following it" (p. 385). "Man must not censure the giver for taking away" (p. 330). "What attestation do you give to God?" (p. 96). "Only rational beings (*τὰ λογικά*) can by their nature have a life with God" (p. 33). "Will not the fact, that we have God as Creator and father and as him who cares for us, lift us out of sorrows and fears?" (p. 33). Such willing conformity makes one "equal to the gods" (p. 48). God is aware of every movement of the soul (p. 51), "inasmuch as it is of his own household and cognate with him." But really man is autonomous, and his will must decide. "As for one's determination (*προαίρεσις*), not even Zeus can overcome it" (p. 8). We are so constructed as not to be hinderable or con-

strained by Him (God) or anyone else, otherwise He "would not be God" or care for us *in the manner He must* (p. 59). "Nothing that happens must happen against our will" (p. 145). The faculty of determination (ἡ προαιρετική) is the faculty *par excellence* (p. 193). "No one is sovereign over another's volition" (p. 42). Over and over again Epictetus repeated in his discourses: "This law God established," and he says: "If you want any boon, take it from yourself" (p. 91). Epictetus was an enthusiastic follower, in these reflections, of Socrates, whom he incessantly extols as the exemplar of freedom: "They can slay me but they cannot injure me" (pp. 92–93, 283, 109). "The beginning of wisdom is the finding of a standard" (εὕρεσις κανόνος) (p. 136). But is not passion the bare negation of clear ideas (we might object), and not at all the substitution of the faulty mental image for the sound one? Epictetus also strove to employ the inductive manner of the famous Athenian, and the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon had a curious palingenesis in the life and manner of the lame moralist of Nicopolis. He admits, it is true, that Socrates did not really affect one-thousandth part of those with whom he came in contact (p. 209). He often rebukes the mere erudition of his own sect; we must not be mere exegetes of other men's ideas and conceits (p. 129). Schooling in philosophy is inadequate; we advance there as far as syllogisms and the like, but not one iota beyond (p. 134). One may analyze syllogisms as aptly as Chrysippus, and still fail in the real aim of philosophy (p. 197). Some philosophers are "lions in the school, but foxes outside" (p. 360; cf. Lucian's *Piscator*).

There is a single allusion in Epictetus to the Chris-

tians; it is a curious passage, and, when we look at it closely, a very positive attestation of their martyrdom. He had (p. 376) just spoken of a certain type of men, to whom children, fortune, possession or non-possession, nay, life itself, are merely as shells on the beach with which children play, no more. To such no tyrants or guardsmen are awful, nor swords. "Then it is from insanity that someone may be disposed toward these things [to treat the dearest things of life as mere shells] and the Galileans from habit" (ὑπὸ ἔθους), but not from philosophical conviction. We record, then, this important admission of the contemporary Stoic, albeit he belittles their motive as mere "habit." But we know their motive, faith in the risen Christ. The passage in Epictetus is a precious illustration of Pliny's report on the Christians (*Epistolae*, x, 96). And we know also that this "habit" had been a continuous one, from Stephen onward to the Bithynian Christians under Pliny's proconsulate, whom that highly cultured gentleman sent to the block so coolly because they were so obstinate. If only they had had motives duly wrought out by Stoical dialectic and psychological analysis, then the philosopher of Nicopolis might have brought himself to admire these Christian martyrs. Little doubt that, herald of freedom though he was, he went through the forms at least of the emperor-worship at anniversary times, and found it easy to justify the cult of beneficent deities who brought to men grain or the grape (p. 18). Of the Galli, the self-emasculated priests of the Phrygian Great Mother (p. 177), he speaks with much less respect than his recent disciple and admirer, J. A. Farrer. Otherwise the Stoics, from Zeno downward, practised an easy accommodation to the figures

of popular religion, by physical and etymological interpretation of the same, quite sufficiently to keep themselves out of trouble. Earlier Christianity, in fact, was not the "interpenetration" of Greek and Roman civilization (one of the quite confident and quite absurd generalizations of Auguste Comte), but a veritable revolution against them, and a struggle which did not, indeed, end with Diocletian; the world, that totality of non-spiritual forces, has not now submitted itself to the call of the Gospel and never will. The church of Christ will always be an *ecclesia militans*.

Let us hear now Epictetus on death. "It behoves us to avoid evils, and death is something necessary" (p. 84). "There is no place to flee from it" (*loc. cit.*). How long must we endure life? As long as reason constrains us to be associated with our poor little body (*συνεῖναι τῷ σωματίῳ*). "That which was born must also perish" (p. 114). "What difference does it make to me, how I shall pass away?" "If you do not die this time, will you not die some time?" (p. 237). Into nothing awful, but whence you came, into the elements (*τὰ στοιχεῖα*); what was heat, to heat, what was earth, to earth, air to air, water to water; there is no Hades, Acheron, Kokytos, Pyriphlegethon, but all is full of gods and spirits; death is a cosmic necessity (p. 301). Life is a fair, in which we are "spectators of God's administration" (p. 330). And finally, if the banquet palls, the guest may leave it by his own act, "the door stands ajar" (p. 244), suicide is at our service (p. 232).

As for Marcus Aurelius (ruled 161–180 A.D.), who died at 59, in many books and in much of current tradition he is canonized, just in what conception or mould of perfection is not always very definite. We

may say at once that his lofty station, in most respects, did not cut short the Stoicism of his life and conviction, derived and imbibed, *e.g.*, from its most eminent representatives, such as Junius Rusticus, whom in time he appointed *Praefectus Urbi*. The imperial sage came upon evil days, when Danube and Euphrates often seemed to be precarious frontiers of Roman world-despotism. His keen mind cannot but have fully grasped the moral inferiority of his wife, Faustina, and her lack of genuine loyalty, or the self-indulgent and shallow character of his younger fellow sovereign, Verus, or the germs of depravity in his only son, Commodus. His stray notes and scattered apothegms "to himself" (*πρὸς ἑαυτόν*), one may call a record of self-communion, often jotted down in his own praetorium in Austria, campaigning against the Quadi or Marcomanni, "night thoughts" in many ways. Marcus was not vain, and he was infinitely patient in dealing with most men, even self-denying, nay, self-effacing. We will come closer to him if we transcribe from these utterances of self-communion of the last, troublous stage of his life, largely consumed in frontier wars beyond the Danube. The Stoic system could be recomposed from these pencillings if other records had perished, but we will endeavour in some degree to excerpt the more personal of these notes. At once we are arrested by the frankness with which he himself enumerates his own various excellencies and the persons to whose example, incentive or precepts he owed them. Such achievements were: His moral character (*τὸ καλόηθες*), his freedom from anger, his reverence for the gods, his charitable open hand, his aversion for showiness and shows of all kinds, including the Roman races, his endurance of

hardships, the simplicity of his wants, his dislike for mantics and theurgy, his rational control of conceptions, his aversion for rhetoric (letters to Fronto) which he conceived as inextricably bound up with vanity, his readiness for forgiveness and reconciliation, his study of Epictetus, his spiritual freedom, and his indifference to chance or fortune (*τὸ ἀκύβεντον*), the equableness of his soul amid pains or the suffering of chronic disease, further, the highest concern of his sect, viz. to live in accordance with nature (*τὸ κατὰ φύσιν ζῆν*) and to be patient with non-philosophers (*τὸ ἀνεκτικὸν τῶν ἰδιωτῶν*).

That buoyancy of joyous energy and a certain optimism generally bound up with robust health were denied him; he rarely was a thoroughly well man. The contents of his night thoughts are meant to give or maintain energy, perseverance, tranquillity in his own soul and frame of being. I would hardly call them consolations. As a whole, it is one of the sternest and gloomiest books that one can read, a companion piece to Ecclesiastes. Like all night thoughts of a man so placed, so limited, these imperial jottings deal much with the end of things, with death. It is merely "an operation of Nature" (*φύσεως ἔργον*), and who fears that is a child (p. 17); it is nothing but the dissolution of the elements of which every living organism is compounded (p. 20). Heraclitus (who taught the *ἐκπύρωσις*, the conflagration of the universe) died of dropsy, Democritus of lice, Socrates of other lice; what of it? You embarked, you set sail, you arrived, now disembark. If for another life, nothing is vacant of gods, not even there; but if in non-sensation, you will cease from troubles (p. 23). Death, like birth, is a mystery of

nature (p. 33). If the souls endure, how will the ether hold them all from eternity (p. 37)? Fame is an empty sound. What is now Camillus, Caeso? And a little further hence, what Scipio, Cato, and then Augustus, Hadrian, Antoninus? There is simply nothing always remembered (p. 41). Suicide is the *ultima ratio* of freedom (p. 60). This life is short; even now all but ashes or mummy, and either a mere name or not even a name (p. 61). Cheerfully thou awaitest either extinction or translation (p. 62). Alexander and his stable boy reached the same status (cf. Lucian's *Dialogi Mortuorum*) (p. 71).

After all he was an agnostic here, as all men with the limitation of mere nature are bound to be; "either a scattering, if atoms, but if union, either extinction (σβέσις) or translation" (p. 87). "The elements of the dead become elements of the universe" (p. 100). Reputation is short-lived, and the whole earth a mere dot (p. 101). Our poor little soul (ψυχάριον) is materially dissoluble (p. 123). A little span, and you will rest, and him who buried you another will mourn (p. 141). Little that each one lives, little the tiny angle of the earth where he lives, little, too, the most extended reputation with posterity (p. 27). Always keep in view the bond between divine and human things (p. 29). Adjust yourself to whatever befalls (p. 30). Renew yourself (ἀνανέου σεαυτόν). Be sovereign over hardships and pleasures (p. 32). The little bubble reputation (δοξάριον) is nothing when measured against the eternity of past and future (p. 32). Be just, large-souled, temperate, sensible, not precipitate (one of the axiomatic virtues of the sect), incapable of being deceived, reverential, free (p. 46). "To practice benefaction is as natural [*sic*] to man as for a vine to produce grapes" (p. 50). The worse is for

the sake of the better, and the better for the sake of reciprocity (p. 57). A calm and imperturbable soul is the aim, or a calm current of being (εὔροια) (p. 122).

The Emperor makes much of the inner voice, which he calls the *daimon* within man. "It is sufficient to be close to the power within oneself," and to serve this in genuine fashion (καὶ τοῦτον γνησίως θεραπεύειν), with no emotion, no haphazard decision, no displeasure with what befalls from gods and men (p. 17). "The God in you shall be the director (προστάτης) of a being masculine and elderly and devoted to the state, and Roman" (p. 24). And the power seated within your breast you must not confound (φύρειν) nor disturb with a mob of mental images, but maintain it gracious and following God in an orderly fashion (p. 30), whatever the Power wants, whom Zeus gave to each one as a director and guide, a detached particle (ἀπόσπασμα) of himself. And this is the intelligence and reason of each one (p. 60). "Do perceive that you have within yourself something better and more divine than those who realize their emotions" (p. 162). What Christians would call sin is to the imperial Stoic the soul's disloyalty to its nature and universal design, in fretting, anger, yielding to pleasure or hardship; the soul insults itself (ὑβρίζει ἑαυτήν, p. 18 sq.). The soul is materially an exhalation (ἀναθυμίασις, a term of Heraclitus and the Stoic founders) from the blood (p. 62). And hard by this crude materialism the other notion: "The sovereign element in man (τὸ ἡγεμονικόν) is constructed or organized (κατεσκεύασται) toward holiness and pity" (p. 153). Ever and again he seeks consolation and anchorage in his pantheistic consciousness and perspective. "O Nature, from thee are all things, in thee

all things, to thee all things" (p. 38). "Remember that philosophy wills those things alone which your nature wills" (p. 53). "What soul is trained in its proper craft (ἔντεχνος) and informed? The one that knows the beginning and the end, and the reason that permeates all essence and administers the universe through all time in fixed cycles" (p. 61). "As you breathe the circumambient air, so also you must have your intelligence in harmony with the mind which embraces all" (p. 110). But the basic note of his soul is weariness and gloom: "Nowhere did you find how to live well" (p. 96). Fame is but ephemeral (p. 122). He bemoans the deep insincerity of actual men (p. 123). Hunting Sarmatians is no great satisfaction (p. 133). There is nothing beyond life and death (p. 135). All the great names are gone, mere smoke (p. 138). All things are transitory and always the same (p. 163). "Take thy leave graciously, for he, too, who dismisses you is gracious" (p. 167).

But even so, pantheist that he was, Marcus strove to be faithful to the established religion of Rome. He defends sacrifice and prayer and swearing by the gods (the forces of nature which support this life and state), which, as a political person, it behoves him to do. "The sun and the other gods" (p. 101). The gods aid men through dreams and mantic art (p. 130). How harmonize piety toward the gods with the conviction that extinction is our lot (p. 159)? The prayers of many men are wicked, as some pray for the satisfaction of an adulterous desire (p. 124). We see, in brief, how his consciousness was curiously composite, the state and tradition, the sect, and his own deeper aspiration, all furnishing elements. In one passage in these notes of self-communion he refers to the Christians. As to

death, above all, readiness and a decision resulting from personal determination, not by way of mere bare rank and file (or lining up) as the Christians (p. 144) (*κατὰ ψιλὴν παράταξιν*). What does it mean? It seems to point, with all the disdainful Stoic's lofty superiority, to martyrs, and to martyrs of his own time or reign. We think of Polycarp at Smyrna (Eusebius, IV, 15), of Justin at Rome condemned to death by the *Praefectus Urbi*, Rusticus, once his own Stoic teacher; we are reminded of Maturus and Sanctus and Blandina and Attalus at Lyon, and of Ponticus (Eusebius, V, 1). Both in Smyrna and on the Rhone the fury of the city mobs was mightily stirred against the Christians, under Marcus. And the hue and cry were always the same, that they were cannibals, consuming little children in their conventicles, that they had practised unspeakable debaucheries. Such charges, by the by, were uttered in a discourse of Fronto himself—Fronto, the Quintilian of his day, raised to consular honours, and high in the confidence both of Antoninus Pius and of Marcus himself. Minucius Felix, the cultured Roman advocate of that reign, who refers to Fronto as "Cirtensis noster" (*Octavius*, IX, 6), credits Fronto with the charges against the Christians. In his *Octavius* then, that admirable first apology of our faith in Latin, we are brought into *medias res* of Rome's religion. This was the pagan and patriotic view, attested by the universal sway of Rome (VI, 1). The Christians were at bottom disloyal in being Christians. And they were atheists. No simulacrum or cult figure was in evidence, where they worshipped (*ἐνθένδε καὶ ἄθεοι κεκλήμεθα*, Justin, *First Apology*, 6). The mere name still furnished adequate cause for condemnation, as it had done more than a generation before to Pliny in

Bithynia. No further argument was needed, and a denial of that name was generally followed by acquittal. It was indeed under the Antonines, whom not to extol is reputed almost a sin against history, that the passionate prejudice against the Christians reached an intensity not recorded before, when "they were unjustly hated and treated despitefully by all mankind" (Justin, *loc. cit.* 1).

Let us transcribe from the *Octavius* of Minucius Felix (IX, 2 sqq.). We must remember that the Christians in Rome then had a history of more than one hundred years. What, then, was still the prevailing pagan conception of the Christians?

With sacred marks and badges they identify and love one another almost before they are acquainted; indiscriminately there is practised among them as it were a certain ritual of forbidden appetites [*quaedam libidinum religio*] and they call themselves promiscuously brothers and sisters, so that even in a customary way debauchery is done under guise of a holy name.... Others say that they worship the genital organs of their very bishop and priest, and adore as it were the nature of their own sire; perhaps this is false, but certainly suspicion attaches to rites secret and nocturnal. And they who talk of a man who was punished with the severest form of execution [the cross] for crime, and [who talk] of the deadly wood of the cross as an emblem of their religion, assign them altars which befit depraved and criminal men, so that they worship that which they deserve. Further the current talk [*fabula*] as to how neophytes are initiated is as awful as it is familiar. An infant covered with grain, so as to deceive those who are not apprized, is placed before him who is to be initiated. This infant by the means of a covering of grain, slain by the neophyte (who has been invited as it were to deal some harmless stabs) by unseen and secret wounds. The blood of this [infant], for shame! they lap with eager thirst, the limbs of this they dissect in eager rivalry, with this victim [*hostia*] they are bound in association, through this complicity of crime are they pledged to mutual

silence. These rites are more abominable than any form of sacrilege. And as for their banquet [the agápê probably is meant], it is a familiar thing. Everybody everywhere speaks of it, and this also the discourse of our Cirtensian attests [viz. Fronto, in a published discourse]. For a feast they assemble on a stated day, with all their children, sisters, mothers, being of every sex and of every age. There, after much feasting, when the carousing has become warm, and the glow of unchaste lust in them, intoxicated as they are, has flared up, a dog tied to a lamp, to which they toss a rib of meat beyond the space of a line where he is tied, is made to start and jump. Thus, after the witnessing light has been overturned and extinguished in the shameless darkness, they tie the bonds of unspeakable lust by indefinite chance and though not all by performance, still by complicity are equally unchaste, since by the aspiration of them in their totality is sought whatever can happen through the act of individuals.

Clearly neither the imperial philosopher, who in his notes of self-communion protests incessantly his justice, fairness, and his natural altruistic bent (*τὸ κοινωνικόν*), nor his representative officials ever cared enough to ascertain the truth.

You poor and ignorant folk, see what your lot is among us. Behold [*Octavius*, XII, 4] your lot is threats, executions, tortures, crosses not to be worshipped but to be suffered, fires which you also predict and fear; where is that God that can aid those who rise from the dead but cannot succour the living? Do not the Romans hold sway and rule without your God, do they not enjoy the whole world and are your masters? But you in suspense and anxiety abstain from honourable pleasures, you do not visit shows, you do not share in parades.... Therefore [XII, 7] if you have any philosophy or modesty, cease to investigate curiously the crash of the heavens and the fates and the mysteries of the universe; enough it is to look at what is before your feet, for you who are pre-eminently unlettered, uncultured, rude, boorish, to whom it is not given to understand matters of state, to whom much more it is denied to discourse on matters of the Gods.

Thus the pagan scholar Caecilius.

"We too," says the Christian Octavius (XXVIII), "have been pagans; we believed the monstrous stories about the Christians, stories which were so bruited about, but never investigated or proven." The following seems to point outright to Lugdunum, to Blandina, and to Ponticus: "Boys and young women make sport of crosses and torments, of wild beasts and all the terrors of executions, and with an inspired endurance of pain."

CHAPTER III

UNDER THE ANTONINES

IT is an odd thing, this passing on of some noted dictum of some author or some authority from generation to generation, as something final and established beyond all cavil and controversy. Such is the oft quoted utterance of Edward Gibbon, that under the Antonines, and preceding his own determination of the initial stage of the Decline and Fall, the ancient world was in a state of comparative felicity.

But slavery, and the draining of the Mediterranean world for one city in Italy, the wretched position of women, the emperor-worship, the official and ever potential hostility of the huge governmental machinery to the only spiritual force extant in that world, the Christians—all these items could be cited as furnishing elements of doubt in questioning the truth of Gibbon's asseveration. If we think soberly and lucidly it is a very shallow statement. After all, religion is the core and the most substantial element in any given civilization —and the passing of pagan religion was the passing of paganism.

It is painful to write what I am now going to write, viz. how slender is the share which the professional classicists hold in such inquiries, and also, how rarely the professional divinity scholar is a thoroughly well read classicist. It is, or was, not so in England. There is, however, just there, in the survey of the contact and conflict of paganism and Christianity, a field in con-

nection with which I would like to repeat an utterance penned by me some fourteen years ago, expressing "the earnest hope [as to classicist and clergyman] that the large extent of their common domain may be more clearly seen." And such indeed is the aim and end of the studies which I have been hitherto permitted to present to my readers, as well as of the present chapter. In this one I would like to present such aspects of Hellenic religion as are afforded by Pausanias and Lucian, two contemporaries of the Antonines (Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius), as well as the impotence of the philosophical schools.

I

Why should we bring in Pausanias as a witness? As to the actual religion and worship of the Greeks in the age of Justin, of Polycarp and Blandina, there is in Pausanias a marvellous wealth of data, a setting down of what was actual and concrete and recordable, far beyond any other literary source. Academic pens, ever striving for some novel or more searching or impressive presentation of well-worn themes within the time-hallowed precincts of classic erudition, have pleased themselves with "stages" of Greek religion. As a matter of fact, we shall find, for the Antonines, a condition of religion, ceremonial and worship, often not rising much above fetichism, and this, too, in the land of Lycurgus and Solon, Aristides and Epaminondas, Pindar and Aeschylus, Socrates and Plato. And it is an impressive observation to see how utterly untouched and unaffected the dwellers in Greece proper remained by the refinements and moralizing of philosophers of their own speech and kindred. Such a one was Plutarch

of Chaeronea, some two generations before Marcus Aurelius and before the pious traveller Pausanias of Lydia. Plutarch may fairly be set down as a seeker after God; his soul aspires to that immutable and imperishable sovereign which he strove to find in the renewal of Platonism (cf. Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen*, III, 2, 2nd ed., 1881, pp. 167 sqq.):

> God is that which truly *is*, and therefore the Eternal Being, of whom we cannot predicate anything but that it *is*, the being to which all plurality and compositeness is foreign, the self-sufficient being, raised above every need; the Good, which in generous beneficence bestows itself upon all, whose will and thought arrange everything in the fairest and most wholesome fashion; the Reason whose providential activity extends to all.

But with all these Platonizing sympathies and aspirations, Plutarch, like his spiritual sire, lacked the spiritual energy and courage of conviction to impugn seriously the polytheism and anthropomorphism of inherited Hellenic religion, so called. He vigorously combats fear and superstition as bound up with the popular religion; but he does not turn his back upon the same, he does not deny it. His essay, *De Superstitione* (περὶ δεισιδαιμονίας), is full of suggestive material. A slave cruelly treated may, in human society, demand to be sold to a gentler master, "but the superstitious fear of the gods affords no exchange, nor was it possible to find a god, whom *he* will not fear, who fears the paternal and ancestral gods, who shivers before the saving and gentle powers with trembling and fear, powers from whom we ask wealth, easy circumstances, peace, concord, and the successful issue of the best words and works" (ch. 4). The sage of Chaeronea, for his own person, sought a middle path between slavish fear and utter godlessness (ἀθεότης). A lofty conception, philo-

sophical interpretation of the popular tradition—but no trace of the radical courage required for denial or rejection. There is an element of loyalty and regard for these gods because they have been transmitted like speech, institutions, life itself, from generation to generation.

The actually pious person in the popular practice Plutarch describes thus, and we will beg the reader to hold this before his mental vision when we shall take up the work of Pausanias:

> Then they believe in the craftsmen who emboss metal and in the marble polishers and in the wax moulders, who make the images of the gods anthropomorphous, and such they shape, construct and worship; but philosophers and men of affairs they contemn when they point out the majesty of God [*τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ σεμνότητα*] coupled with goodness and magnanimity and kindly spirit and concern.

Here is the monotheism of the Neoplatonist, but could it really be grafted upon the Olympian world with its lusts, loves, hates, feuds, and rancour? How was that to be done? Nor did the Stoics dare to remove these names and legends from the Greek world. What they really did do was this: They conserved the Olympic figures of Greek tradition, stripping them of all personality or moral power or intelligence, ascribing to them, or reducing them to, physical, enduring powers and properties, which are a part and parcel of this cosmos of ours; and from Zeno onward they occupied themselves much with this kind of physical exegesis of the Greek bibles, Homer and Hesiod. And there is, consequently, in this sect a pantheism, as I have shown in a previous chapter, but with this, and in a curious harmony with this, a system of physical forces and established phenomena, which they clothed with the traditional names of the Olympians. The ether is Zeus

which possesses the sovereign position among the elements.

> When this ancient opinion had filled Greece, that Uranos was emasculated by his son Kronos, and that Kronos himself was fettered by his son Zeus, a physical theory not lacking in finesse was conveyed under the wicked legends; for they claimed that the celestial most lofty and ethereal nature (that is fiery) which produced all things through itself, was without that part of the body which needed the association of another for the purpose of begetting. (Cicero, *De Deorum Natura*, II, 63.)

Here was the principle of allegory and accommodation, infinitely elastic for the school and sect, and splendidly convenient for safety and practical harmony with popular nomenclature. The myths and legends were not cast forth, as the Christians cast them forth, but adjusted and conserved.

To return briefly to Plutarch: "The legends must be interpreted in a pious and philosophical manner" (ὁσίως καὶ φιλοσόφως, *De Iside et Osiride*, ch. 11). The noted study on Egyptian religion in fact exhibits the characteristic traits of the sage of Chaeronea, his fondness for connecting myths with philosophy: "For Isis is the female element in nature, and endowed with the faculty of receiving all generative processes [the matrix of new life] in respect of which she has been called nurse and all-receiving by Plato, but myriad-named by the many" (ch. 53). "Whence not without reason they have the legend, that the soul of Osiris is eternal and imperishable but that Typhon oftentimes rends the body and causes it to disappear, and that Isis wandering about seeks it and fits it together again." And then follows the Platonist's interpretation: "For that which has Being and Intelligence and Goodness is stronger than Destruction and Change" (ch. 54). He is bitterly

opposed to the Stoics who map out and dissolve the divinities "into winds and floods and sowing and ploughing and what the soil undergoes, and the change of seasons" (*loc. cit.* ch. 66), between which conceptions and Spinoza's *Natura Naturans* there seems to be but little difference. He continues very aptly: "These differ not at all from those who rate sails and ropes and anchors as pilot, and woof and yarn as the weaver, and the cup and the potion of milk and honey and barley-water as the physician" (*loc. cit.*).

Plutarch, in fact, claims that there had been a curious deterioration and decadence, viz. whereas the earlier men honoured the gods and distinguished them from their gifts in nature, the later men in a crude and foolish manner *identified and confounded the phenomena and aspects of nature with the gods themselves*; indeed, he designates as the prevailing and current and popular conception, that the Greeks call the cult-figures, not representations or images of the gods, but the gods themselves outright, the logical sequence of concrete and visible idols as a system of worship. And this furnishes an admirable point to begin our survey of Pausanias.

The work of Pausanias, the title of which we may render *A Tour of Greece* (Περιήγησις Ἑλλάδος), was written, in the main, during the reign of Marcus Aurelius. Hadrian had powerfully stimulated the interest in the older things—institutions, letters, temples, memorials, art. He had proven himself a generous patron and restorer at many points of classic Greece. "And all the sanctuaries, which he partly built anew and partly adorned with consecrated gifts and outfittings or gave as gifts to Greek cities, it is all recorded

by him in the common sanctuary of the gods," the Pantheon at Athens (1, 5, 5). Of his concubine Antinous there was a noted temple at Mantinea; "Antinous also was rated by them to be a god; of those at Mantinea the temple of Antinous is the newest" (VIII, 9, 7).

In order to get into *medias res* at once, I will take up one of the most curious and characteristic items. Of all the cult-figures (ἀγάλματα) he apprised most highly the most ancient rather than the masterpieces of Greek art in marble or in bronze; I mean the idols of wood carved and polished, and hence uniformly called ξόανα. Such a one, of Zeus the Counsellor, he notes as found still in the council hall, of the Five Hundred, at Athens[1], or the ancient ξόανον of Artemis at Brauron[2]; the wooden Hermes in the temple of Athene Polias was even held as a consecrated gift of mythical Kekrops[3]. A ξόανον of Ariste and Kalliste in the sanctuary of Artemis near the Academy[4] and the *most sacred* ξόανον of Nemesis at Smyrna have no wings (τὰ ἁγιώτατα ξόανα, 1, 33, 7); by "most sacred" he means those most resorted to by worshippers, as in our day at Lourdes and Einsiedeln. Of Ajax there is a temple on the island of Salamis, and in it his cult-figure (ἄγαλμα) of ebony[5]. On the Attic frontier, near Plataea, at Eleutherai, there was a *xoanon* of Dionysos, the wine-god, taken away by the Athenians; the wooden cult-figure now there has been fashioned in imitation of the same[6]. In the new marble temple of Apollo at Megara, erected by the Emperor Hadrian in place of the plain ancient one of brick, were three different cult-figures of Apollo; all were *xoana* (*i.e.* of wood and of hoary antiquity),

[1] 1, 5, 3. [2] 1, 23, 7. [3] 1, 27, 1.
[4] 1, 29, 2. [5] 1, 35, 3. [6] 1, 38, 8.

all of ebony[1]. In a very ancient temple of Dionysos at Megara Pausanias observed a *xoanon* equally old with the shrine itself. This cult-figure was concealed or covered over, except the face; probably the rest had mouldered away[2]. In a temple at Corinth he saw wooden cult-figures of Dionysos, gilded over except the faces; these were anointed over with some red liquid (symbolism of grapes and wine-lees)—these cult-figures in the living legend were connected with the rending of Pentheus of Thebes. In Argos they even claimed that a wooden cult-figure still extant was put up by mythical Danaos himself, and the travelling student here even suggests that such cult-figures were imported from Egypt, or bore that type. At Pherai in Achaia thirty square stones were worshipped by the natives, each having the name of some god[3]. The oldest cult-figure at Thespiae in Boeotia was a white stone[4]. At Orchomenos they still worshipped meteoric stones[5].

I have cited enough to show the maintenance of a very ancient form of idolatry with but slight modification by advanced art or esthetics, and I smile when I think of the fervid unction of some professional archaeologists. Clearly these crude and primitive cult-figures were worshipped far more, even then, than the later and more artistic ones, chiefly because they were the oldest and nearer to the original establishment of the particular cult.

In that age, too, many sanctuaries were decaying or actually in ruins or roofless, and we observe that worship was essentially depending on the preservation

[1] I, 42, 5. [2] II, 43, 5. [3] VII, 22. 4.
[4] IX, 27, 1. [5] IX, 38. 1.

of the cult-figure or *agalma*. Scores of such cases of dilapidation or complete ruin are recorded by Pausanias, which I have no space here to itemize, as in Sikyon, Nemea, Mycenae, Argos, Hysiae, Tiryns, Hermione, Nauplia, Sellasia, Gythion, and many other places, and many parts of ancient Hellas had become poor and depopulated, mere memories of a greater past. But correspondingly great was the fervour of local pride in pointing out the very spots; *e.g.* where Artemis first hunted[1], Helen's bath[2], an olive tree twisted by Hercules[3], the stone at which nine men of Troezen purified Orestes for his mother's murder[4], the temple of Aphrodite Kataskopia where Phaedra gazed down on the fair Hippolytus[5], the crevice through which Hercules brought up the hell-hound from the lower world[6], and the spot where Hera fooled by Zeus, near Thebes, gave suck to the infant Hercules[7].

It is by no means all antiquarianism or the living tradition of particular legends connected with each particular cult-figure or shrine. Though for this end Pausanias almost everywhere derived much detailed lore from the particular priests and the local expounders or relators (ἐξηγηταί), who, *e.g.*, explained the particular names and descriptive epithets of local gods and worship. Often the pious traveller is compelled by divergences and conflicts of such traditions to withhold belief, or to assume a critical attitude[8].

But more important for our own interest are the items of actual worship and sacrifice. On a certain mountain in Argolis there were altars of Zeus and

[1] I, 19, 6. [2] II, 2, 3. [3] II, 28, 2.
[4] II, 31, 4. [5] II, 32, 2. [6] II, 35, 20.
[7] IX, 25, 2. [8] II, 5, 2; 23, 5.

Hera; here they sacrificed in his day when they needed rain (δεηθῆσαν ὄμβρου σφίσιν ἐνταῦθα θύουσι)[1]. Near the council-hall of the Five Hundred in Athens there is a rotunda (θόλος) where the Prytanes sacrificed. Such matters were, I need not say, rigidly prescribed in detail by tradition, conformity with which constituted the essence of Greek religiosity or piety. At Athens, *e.g.*, the sacrifice to Zeus Polieus (*i.e.* the special guardian of the commonwealth) was enacted in the following curious manner. Barley mixed with wheat was placed on the altar; the ox which they kept ready, properly fattened, goes to the altar and begins to eat of the grain on it. The so-called oxslayer (βουφόνος) now approaches, fells the ox with his axe[2], and flees, throwing away the axe; the axe is then formally brought to trial. On the altar of Zeus Hypatos (the Highest) before the Erechtheum, only cakes were the oblation[3]. On Mt Parnes there is an altar where they sacrifice to Ombrios (the giver of rain-showers)[4]. Pausanias saw certain cult-figures at Epidaurus, and, he adds: "I sacrificed to them" (II, 2, 4). He believes in the efficacy of these things, for he states: "I have seen human beings already averting hail by sacrifices and incantations" (II, 34, 3). Sometimes altars were constructed from the ashes of the thigh bones[5]. The sacrifices are conceived as made, as at Aegae in Achaia, directly "to the cult-figures" (VII, 23, 11).

Ritual and prescription we must content ourselves with briefly illustrating. In the temple of Aphrodite at Sikyon the temple keeper must be a woman who no longer must know any man; the priestess who holds

[1] II, 25, 10. [2] I, 24, 1. [3] I, 26, 5.
[4] I, 32, 2. [5] V, 13, 8.

the annual post, a virgin. All others must stop at the threshold and perform their invocations from that point[1]. In the annual festival to Demeter at Hermione four elderly women perform the killing of a heifer with a sharp scythe, cutting the throat; three other heifers follow, and it is recorded as a wonderful thing, that these three always fall on the same side on which the first fell[2]. At Plataea they had a periodical celebration in honour of Hera, a celebration called *Daidala* (the old style cult-figures), because once, near their town, Hera, jealous and suspicious as she always was of the fickle Zeus, saw him conveying a new bride for himself on a wagon, but when she approached and rent the garment of the hated rival and perceived that it was only a wooden cult-figure she was gladly reconciled. This occurrence was the real theme of that periodic festival, the *Daidala*. Such legends were enacted by regular performers in a dramatic or mimetic fashion as recorded in IX, 3, 1–9, which description is probably the most detailed of such things in Pausanias.

Our Lydian traveller believed in dreams; the authority of Homer was fairly absolute; Hesiod was rated as one inspired. While many things had passed away, a special providence had held its hand over the Olympian games[3]; he is rather fond of the summary and collective terms, ὁ δαίμων (the power above us), τὸ θεῖον (the deity). He has seen the Maeander as well as the Rhine, the Nile, and Tiber, the palms of Palestine no less than the Anio near Rome, everywhere studying the visible elements of religion chiefly. But, with all his personal aspirations and a kind of craving for spiritual rest, he confesses at one point

[1] II, 10, 4. [2] II, 35, 7. [3] V, 10, 1.

that, after all, Fortune (Τύχη) is "the greatest of gods in human affairs and furnishes the largest measure of strength" (v, 30, 5). *Isis and Serapis* then were making great strides in old Hellas; fairly, the only new shrines were those erected in their honour. He notes such at Megara, at Kenchreae, at Corinth, as you go up to Acrocorinth[1], at Methana, Hermione, Sparta, Patrai, and elsewhere. The "religion" of the Greeks was local, institutional, earthy, secular, and not merely unspiritual, but in the main antispiritual. But their thinkers or leaders insisted that these divinities were at least concrete and real, "*that they proved themselves*, whereas the Christians maligned these as spooks or demons, while their Founder was not even a spook but in reality a corpse, and were looking for a 'Father' resembling him" (Celsus, ed. Keim, p. 111). On the other hand, Celsus, like Plutarch, asserts that the average person actually prayed to the cult-figures, "as though some one was chattering at the walls of a room" (*loc. cit.* p. 118), without understanding what is the essence of gods and heroes. A deist can easily compromise with idolatry, for it is, or may be accepted as, a form of "natural religion"; and where revelation is denied in principle all religions are of equal value.

II

Lucian of Samosata, a Syrian by birth, a Greek by culture, a Roman by name and political status, views the traditional religion of the Hellenic world as negatively as his contemporary Pausanias did positively and piously. Originally apprenticed to a sculptor, he trained in the usual way to be a rhetor and public

[1] II, 4, 6.

lecturer. Some of his published pieces exhibit that professional faculty; they are, however, in our present quest, quite negligible. His tours carried him as far as the Provence. For some time he resided at Athens, and for awhile seems to have devoted himself to philosophy there.

His sure and exquisite sense of literary form made him study the old comedy, and the dialogue of Plato; the satire of Aristophanes, and the dialectic and irony of Socrates found in Lucian a curious palingenesis. The satire of the Cynic Menippus had for his keen mind a strong affinity both of form and substance. It was the age, too, when the Neo-atticists, often in a very mechanical manner, vied with one another to reproduce the classicism of the past[1]. In his day he knew such shining lights of culture as Herodes Atticus and Favorinus[2]. There is a particular vein in Lucian that reminds one of Thackeray; the plaudits and ambitions and the untold vanities of society, so-called, found in him a satirist whom nothing and no one could deceive, daunt or dazzle.

For the mythological religion of Greece, from Homer and Hesiod downward, he entertains as much respect as a child for a jumping-jack, or as the men who work the strings of a theatre of marionettes. "What most makes me choke with anger," says his Prometheus (17), "is that while you blame my creation of man, and particularly of the women [as in Hesiod] you still are enamoured of them, and you do not cease descending, sometimes as bulls, again as becoming satyrs and swans, and you deem it proper to make gods out of

[1] Cf. *Prometheus*, 6; *Rhetorum Praeceptor*, 1.
[2] *Demonax*, 12, 24.

them." In his *Dialogues of the Gods* the innocent and beauteous Ganymede appears with the lustful Zeus; Hera as upbraiding the incontinence and the incessant amours of her spouse. "Love," the latter admits (*Dialogi Deorum*, 6, 3), "is something forceful and not only rules over men, but over ourselves also sometimes." His amours with Semele, with Alkmene are related by junior fellow Olympians like bits of scandal at court, as of a king's newest mistresses and intrigues. It is all a mass of immoral absurdities.

But there is a serious side to it also; we cite Menippus himself, the *alter ego* of Lucian (*Necyomantia*, 3):

> For I, as long as I was a boy, hearing [we would say reading] Homer and Hesiod relating wars and rebellions, not only of half-gods but actually of the gods themselves also, but further also their adulteries and acts of violence and kidnappings and trials in court and expulsions of fathers and espousals with sisters, all these things were fine, and I experienced a very positive prurience in that direction; but when I grew up to manhood, again, in turn, I heard the statutes issuing commands which ran counter to the poets, that one must not commit adultery, nor rebel or kidnap. And I got into a great perplexity, not knowing what to do with myself.

And here may be a suitable point to offer an observation which may clear some obscurities: Why could a Lucian deal so freely and with so unlimited a license and with complete impunity with these things, the stock in trade of the peculiar topical worship and the "religion" of the Hellenic world? The efforts of loftier minds like Aeschylus or Pindar to elevate, refine, dignify, these traditions had proven utterly futile. As a matter of fact Greek mythology had long become the special preserves of the comic stage, and particularly of a species of spectacle which we may call panto-

mimic dramatization—as popular and as ubiquitous as films now are.

There were dancers whose fame was as extensive as the empire. Their sphere was a vast one. Such a pantomimic artist,

beginning with Chaos at once and the first creation of the world he must himself know everything up to the times of Cleopatra Queen of Egypt. For by this distance we must limit the erudition of the dancer, and the intermediate items he must particularly know, the castration of Uranos, the origin of Aphrodite, the battle of the Titans, the birth of Zeus, the ruse of Rhea [the substitution of the stone], the fetters of Kronos, the drawing of lots by the three brothers, then, next in order, the rebellion of the Giants, the stealing of the fire, the moulding of men, the punishment of Prometheus, the strength of Eros, and after this the floating about of Delos, and the birth-pangs of Leto and the slaying of the Python, and the plot of Tityos and the central point of the Earth found by the flights of the eagles, Deucalion on top of this and the great shipwreck of Life in his time, and one ark guarding the remnant of the human race and men made out of stones once more, then the rending of Iacchos and the stratagem of Hera and the burning of Semele and both the births of Dionysos and all that deals with Athena and all that deals with Hephaistos and Erichthonios and the feud about Attica and Halirrothion and the first trial in the Areopagus, and altogether the entire Attic mythology, and particularly the wanderings of Demeter and the finding of her daughter and the hospitality of Keleos and the agriculture of Triptolemos and the viticulture of Ikarios and all about Boreas and all that befell Erigone, and all about Oreithyia and Theseus and Aegeus; and further the reception of Medea and again her flight to Persia, and the daughters of Erechtheus and those of Pandion (*De Saltatione*, 37–40),

and ever so many more, myths of Sparta, of Megara, Minos, Thebes, Corinth, Mycenae and the Pelopidae, Helen, Paris, and Troy; legends of Elis, Arcadia, Aetolia, Thrace and Thessaly. Such a dancer must know his Homer and Hesiod, his tragic writers par-

ticularly, etc., etc. In Nero's and Seneca's time there was a pantomimic dancer at Rome, all the rage in that capital, who by himself alone danced the whole story of the adulterous amours of Ares and Aphrodite (*Odyssey*), and did it all so marvellously that even the noted Cynic philosopher Demetrius, the friend of Seneca, cried out: "I hear what you are doing, I do not merely see it, but you seem to me to be talking with your hands" (Lucian, *loc. cit.* 63).

With no less sweeping condemnation does the satirist of Samosata deal with the current sacrifices, the utter folly of the so-called piety bound up therewith, and the futility of the underlying conceptions. "One may buy from them sound health, may be, for some little heifer, to be rich for four oxen, to be king for a hecatomb, to return safe and sound from Troy to Pylos for nine oxen" (*De Sacrificiis*, 2). "And when one sacrifices, all [the gods] have a good time, opening their mouths wide for the smoke, and drinking the blood which flows around the altars just as the flies do, but if they dine at home, nectar and ambrosia is their fare" (*loc. cit.* 9). Of the Olympian Zeus: "Those who come forward into the temple neither believe to see the ivory from India any more, nor the gold mined in Thrace, but the son of Kronos and Rhea himself transferred to earth by Pheidias and bidden to gaze on the solitude of the people of Pisa, and well satisfied if once in four years some one will sacrifice to him a side bounty of the Olympians" (*ibid.* 11). Zeus himself, in Homer, is much weaker than Fate (Εἱμαρμένη) and in a state of pitiful, even if immortal, dependency (*Jupiter Confutatus*), and his "providence" is but a precarious thing. In the Olympian Council Hermes is directed by Zeus

to seat the gods so as to give them their rank according to the material of the cult-figures, "in the front seats those of gold, then after these, those of silver, then next whatever are of ivory, then those of bronze or marble, and among these very ones those of Pheidias or Alkamenes or Myron or Euphranor or similar craftsmen shall be given a preference of honour, but the rag-tag and bob-tail and inartistic ones packed together somewhere in the distance shall hold their tongues and merely give full measure to the assembly" (*Jupiter Tragoedus*, 7). This standard placed Anubis, Attis or Mithras over the Olympians.

The vast variety of ethnic worship Lucian truly conceived as an element of reflection which would lead a sober observer to general rejection; one may see here the growing necessity of those who clung to paganism to resort to syncretism, and we shall see that they did so resort, in the last stage, Neoplatonism[1].

But we must turn now to a concrete case of a cult actually established in Lucian's day, whereby we may observe the paganism under the Antonines not only *in posse*, but also *in esse*, and in characteristic operation. Lucian describes with much detail and with passionate reprobation the specific cult set up by a certain Alexander of Abonūteichos in Pontus[2]. Hope and Fear, he shows[3], were the powers that drove men into sanctuaries, and that, of old, enriched Delphi and the other oracles. The hierophant of this described cult and oracle[4] buried, in the temple of Apollo at Chalcedon, the oldest shrine there, bronze tablets (we think of our own Mormon tables) which stated that presently

[1] *Loc. cit.* 42.
[2] *Alexander seu Pseudomantis.*
[3] *Ibid.* 8.
[4] *Loc. cit.* 10.

Aesculapius with his father Apollo was to migrate to Abonūteichos. The tablets were duly discovered, and the fame duly spread through Pontus and Bithynia. Oracular hexameters were duly provided, extolling the new prophet, hexameters mysterious and lofty in tone. Now serpents (as at Epidaurus) were the ancillary animal of the god of healing. Among the foundations of the new temple Alexander buried a hollow goose-egg, in which he had placed a tiny snake, which amid the awe and admiration of the community was duly discovered. As the tiny reptile wound around the fingers of the priest, the crowd welcomed Aesculapius and felicitated their own town for this blessed epiphany of the god. Soon vast numbers of Paphlagonians gathered—sheep Lucian dubs them[1]. Meanwhile he had gotten ready a head of a serpent, a head of goodly size, made of linen, which Alexander with manual dexterity displayed on either side of his beard. The light in his house was maintained sombre and subdued. Everyone told how in so short time the god had grown so wonderfully. He was called "Glykon." "Glykon I am, third scion from Zeus, a light for all mankind."

Soon the oracle was in full blast. Clients entered the newly completed temple; they brought little scrolls sewed up and sealed. In these their inquiries were written. I refrain from alluding to modern parallels. The hierophant retired with the scrolls to the holiest (ἄδυτον); here he received the answers from Aesculapius, who furnished the same in hexameter, written under the questions. Alexander had clever devices for unsealing and resealing. The populace meanwhile

[1] *Loc. cit.* 15.

reasoned that only a god could ascertain the contents of the sealed scrolls and append the replies. One of Alexander's mechanisms was a heated needle. Then he had a kind of paste or wax to copy the seals. For making the impression he used a kind of plaster of Paris. Some answers were involved and ambiguous, others positively obscure. He was clever in sizing up the characters of his questioners and prescribing for them. Others sought light as to expectations, profits, wills. A drachma and two obols was the ordinary fee (about 20 cents). Alexander made about 70,000 to 80,000 drachmas a year (about $12,600 to $14,600). Many individuals consulted Aesculapius ten or fifteen times.

Alexander supported a large staff. Also he sent agents or solicitors abroad to work up business. The followers of the school of Epicurus strove to encompass his discomfiture. He in turn gave out that Pontus was full of *atheists and Christians*, whom the populace should stone if they desired to have the god be gracious to them. As to Epicurus, one of his oracles said that he was seated in mud, below, with leaden shackles on[1]. So the Christians, in the pagan mind, were in curious company. For the Platonists and Stoics and Neopythagoreans[2] were on good terms with Alexander and his following.

His fame meanwhile spread even to Rome. A man of high rank there, Rutilianus, earnestly took up the cult, and sought direct reports through envoys. He even proclaimed Alexander's fame at court, and became himself a client of that interpreter of the god, asking, *e.g.*, what instructor to place in charge of his son's

[1] *Loc. cit.* 25. [2] *Ibid.*

studies. Alexander gave him Pythagoras and Homer; and, when the youth soon died, the hierophant explained that now he had the company of these eminent men in the lower world. Alexander operated himself with the metempsychosis of the Pythagorean system[1]; Rutilianus was a follower of the same. He married Alexander's daughter, born to the beauteous new Endymion by Selene herself. Rutilianus sacrificed entire hecatombs to his celestial mother-in-law.

The height of Alexander's fame fell in with the great plague, in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, 167–168 A.D. His agents in Rome informed him in advance of the questions that were coming from that quarter, so that he was fairly prepared. He also devised special initiatory rites and forms somewhat like those of Eleusis. There was a prefatory announcement running thus: "If any *Atheist or Christian or Epicurean* has come as a spy of the rites, let him flee, but those believing in the god shall be initiated with good fortune." Then at once, at the beginning, the expulsion would take place, and he would lead off by saying: "*Out with the Christians!*" and the whole mass of worshippers would respond with the acclamation: "*Out with the Epicureans!*"

We will leave the hierophant of Aesculapius here, and briefly turn to the famous passage in the life of Peregrinus Proteus the Cynic, who in 166 or 168 A.D., at Olympia, voluntarily immolated himself, like Empedocles. Surveying his career, Lucian relates that at one time he was a Christian, at least, "he thoroughly learned [ἐξέμαθε] the marvellous wisdom of the Christians, and in a short time attained a very conspicuous position among them, even expounding some of their

[1] *Loc. cit.* 34.

books" (*De Morte Peregrini*, 11). He goes on to say: "*They still revere* [σέβουσι] *that great one, the man who was crucified in Palestine because he introduced this new esoteric religion* [τελετήν] *into life.*" He was imprisoned for a while as a Christian, when they exerted themselves to the uttermost for his preservation and comfort, old women, widows (deaconesses), and orphan children. Funds were placed at his disposal in the most generous manner. "*For the wretched beings have persuaded themselves that they will be altogether immortal and will live forever, wherefore also they despise death and as a rule* [οἱ πολλοί] *they voluntarily surrender themselves. And then also their first law-giver persuaded them that they were all brothers to one another; after once having gone over* [παραβάντες] *they had denied the Greek gods and worshipped that crucified sage of theirs and lived in accordance with his laws*" (*loc. cit.*). The Christians as a whole impressed Lucian as ἰδιῶται, *i.e.* "common folk," uncultured. The dialogue *Philopatris* is clearly not by Lucian, but a later forgery. Gesner suggested Julian's time, Niebuhr even that of the age of the Byzantine Emperor, Nicephorus Phocas, 968 A.D.

Almost more trenchant and uncompromising than his rejection of the Olympians and their current cult was Lucian's condemnation of the Greek philosophers of his time and their schools. At a certain point in his career, when he was still in the profession of a travelling lecturer, he looked forward himself to such a life with anticipations of spiritual benefit and intellectual advancement as well[1], when he planned for himself a long residence at Athens itself, the far-famed centre of such pursuits. Whereas Rome was full of

[1] *Nigrinus.*

noise, of sycophants, of flatterers, and crude worldliness, a curious training ground indeed for those who wished to see how strong was their moral fibre in withstanding these currents of evil and the shows and crude pleasures that fairly engulfed the sojourner there[1]. But his subsequent residence at Athens destroyed, for him, all such illusions.

For the sincere Cynics, with their contempt of all shams, Lucian felt a certain affinity, as was obvious, and especially for Menippus of Gadara, who served his critical purpose almost as much as did the figure of Socrates in the dialogues of Plato. What impressed him most was the striking inconsistency between their lectures, their tenets, their professions, on the one hand, and their life and conduct on the other, as one Thrasykles (a fictitious name), with his noble beard and eyebrows so serious and awe-inspiring, and so decorous in appearance and so unctuous in his discourses on virtue and in his contempt for the votaries of pleasure (the Epicureans) and in his eulogy of a minimum of material wants, clearly a Stoic lecturer. But what a contrast in the evening when he dines! A glutton from every point of view, and feeding with unseemly voracity, licking the very dishes when he had emptied them of their contents, and in his cups so immoderate that often he had to be carried away; in his sober hours a flatterer and hot after money, and a perjurer[2]. In the *Dialogi Mortuorum*, 10, 8, a philosopher enters the lower world; Hermes removes the garment from the newcomer's real being. "How great folly and contention and empty-opinion and bootless questionings and prickly statements and complicated

[1] *Ibid.* 19. [2] *Timon*, 54–55.

notions and much vain labour forsooth and not a little empty babbling and nonsense and petty theorizing, and by Zeus also this gold here and luxury and shamelessness and wrathfulness and display and softness; these have not escaped my notice," says Hermes, the escort of souls, "although they are concealing them very hard. And put away lying and conceit and the belief that you are better than the others; for if you embark [on Charon's skiff] having all these, what fifty-oared vessels could hold you?"

Lucian charges Aristotle with gross flattery toward Alexander and as being insatiable in getting appropriations out of him[1]. Vanity drove Empedocles to leap into the crater of Aetna[2]. Plato flattered the autocrats in Sicily[3]. As to the antinomies of the schools and sects, one commends pleasure as the *summum bonum*[4]; another, toil and severe exertion; another despises money and rates it as an *adiaphoron*; another commends it as a boon; as to the universe what shall one say? So, too, in the various theses of the sects as to the cosmic problems, with all the contrasts between the materialists and the idealists. As to money, pleasure, glory, they despise them in their lectures, but pursue them avidly in their life and conduct. In his auction of lives (*Vitarum Auctio*) Zeus is the master and Hermes the factotum of the business, and does the crying. The schools appear in turn in their founders, offering the best life, each of them, the greatest measure of happiness to the purchaser. So Pythagoras comes forward, whose doctrine is briefly, one must fairly say, oddly presented; then Diogenes the Cynic, cosmopolitan,

[1] *Dialogi Mortuorum*, 13, 5.
[2] *Ibid.* 20, 4.
[3] *Ibid.* 20, 5.
[4] *Menippus*, 4.

representative of freedom and fewest and simplest wants, who teaches endurance and emancipates the soul from all fear of caste and social pretence. Next follow the hedonism of the Cyrenaic School, Democritus the laughing, and Heraclitus the gloomy philosopher, Socrates, who is somewhat confounded with Platonism[1]. Chrysippus follows, the chief expounder of the Stoa; evidently our satirist keenly dislikes the micrology of Stoic logic, and the caricature is plainly a part of Lucian's design. The Aristotelians and the Sceptics are somewhat briefly dispatched.

One might be inclined to take it all as mere jingle, not seriously meant. But the most important as well as the most elaborate of these anti-philosophical dialogues, the *Hermotimus*, must be taken seriously. Hermotimus has spent twenty years[2] to master completely and soundly all the tenets of a single sect, doing nothing but attending the lectures, for the path to excellence is long and rough and steep; the higher happiness is the prize and goal, when the adept[3] expects to look down on the rest of mankind as upon mere ants and rubbish, utterly emancipated, too, from the sway of ambition, wealth, and pleasure, freed from all emotion and passions. Clearly Hermotimus is a disciple of the Stoa. But we learn that his professor drags his pupils to court if they are behindhand with their fees; many, too, have given their notes and pay interest. He has had a sharp *rencontre* with the Aristotelian professor at a birthday dinner, and drank heavily, too, so that he was unable to lecture the next day.

But who will prove what is the best philosophy?

[1] *Vitarum Auctio*, 18.
[2] *Hermotimus*, 2.
[3] *Ibid.* 5.

Shall numbers determine that, or reputation, or outward appearance? How is it to be determined? By whom? For the sectaries all abuse and depreciate one the other's philosophy. Supposing Plato, Pythagoras, Aristotle, appeared once more, what could a Stoic say to overthrow or disprove them? To judge of their philosophies fairly, should not Hermotimus be willing to spend as much time and labour on the study of each of these great schools as he has bestowed on the Stoa, to wit, twenty years? The only proper judge, then, is he who knows the wisdom of all the schools equally well[1]. And the prime qualification of this expert must be, to be critical and cautious and to withhold assent. Life is hardly long enough for this end. And then, too, the reading of all the books written by them on every topic—a formidable task! Or how could the taste of the first morsel be a reliable guide for the appropriation of the whole?

Clearly Lucian is a kind of agnostic as over against the professional philosophers. We must not forget the fact that for some four hundred years, more or less, these schools had been going on, and in the main in a rigid and scholastic way of dogmatic and didactic iteration and repetition; *and the idolatry and crude superstition of the many had been neither lessened nor refined by the sects at all.* Antoninus, and still more the imperial Stoic, Marcus Aurelius, had made philosophy fashionable. At Rome many of the rich established Greek philosophers in their households, but the life of such was humiliating, glittering misery, set in a substance of crude luxury and superficial pretence, rated a little lower than cooks and lap-dogs, where

[1] *Hermotimus*, 45.

concubines and dancing masters have the first consideration[1]. All indeed is vanity—this sad and weary tone echoes and re-echoes from all of Lucian's writings. Futile is athleticism[2]; futile is military renown; fanciful and vain is apotheosis, when skulls of kings or beggars lie in democratic juxtaposition; pompous the pretence of great tombs, or costly ones; vain the accumulation of wealth; and there is no immortality of the soul.

It is all a sad author, this Lucian, no less sad than his imperial contemporary, Marcus Aurelius himself, of whose night-thoughts we have already presented some survey[3]. Greek culture had run its course, but it had no transcendental end or perspective, limited as it was by this little earth and our common mortality; none of their culture-leaders could furnish what he had not gained himself, nor knew where to gain, a universal truth and the central element of it, God, He, of whom St Paul wrote—in a hopeless and weary world: "According to the working of his mighty power, which he had wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might, and domain, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. i, 19–21).

As Polycarp died for that Name under Marcus Aurelius, so Paul of Tarsus, under Nero, laid his head on the block, probably not far from the Ostian Road. Under Vespasian the elder Pliny wrote his cyclopaedic work, the *Naturalis Historia*, dedicated to

[1] *De Mercede Conductis.* [2] *Dialogi Mortuorum*, 10, 5.
[3] In our last chapter.

Titus who destroyed Jerusalem. In the introduction there is a declaration which, while it antedates the Antonines by three-quarters of a century, still should not be left unrecorded in these pencillings, for Pliny was perhaps the most widely read of all the Romans, and his mental eye swept over the entire domain of ancient culture, science, invention, and attainment in the widest periphery of human aspiration and endeavour. As a *testimonium animae* it is, then, here recorded. And it also exhibits, I think, the close proximity with pantheism in which a kind of agnosticism is apt to be found. After having extolled the sun and having almost deified it, he proceeds thus (*Naturalis Historia*, II, 14 sqq.):

Therefore I deem it a peculiarity of human weakness to inquire into the shape and form of god. Whatever god is, if only he is another [*scil.* than the universe] and in whatever part, he is wholly of perception, wholly of sight, wholly of hearing, wholly of vitality, wholly of mentality, wholly of himself. To believe in innumerable ones indeed [as Romans did] and even some derived from the moral failings of men [by contrast], like Chastity, Concord, Thought, Hope, Honour, Clemency, Fidelity, or [as Democritus held] two altogether, Punishment and Benefaction—this means an augmentation of folly. Frail and toilsome mortality has subdivided these things into separate elements, mindful of its own weakness, in order that each one might by way of portions worship that of which he stood most in need. Consequently we find some names in some nations and others in others, and innumerable divinities in the same, those of the lower world also being mapped out in classes, diseases and many plagues also, while with fearful mind we crave to have them appeased. Therefore also by act of Government a shrine of *Fever* had been dedicated on the Palatine; an altar of *Orbona* [Bereavement] near the temple of the Lares, and of Evil Fortune on the Esquiline. Wherefore the people of the celestials may be conceived as more extensive than that of human beings, since individuals also out of themselves make as many

divine Junos and Geniuses by choosing them for themselves, and nations indeed hold certain animals and even obscene things as gods, and many things more shameful to utter, swearing by stinking onions and such like things.

He then sums up his estimate of the Olympian mythology in the following words:

To believe in matrimonial unions indeed among gods, and that in so long an age no one is born of them, and that some are always aged and gray, others young men and boys, of swarthy complexion, wearing wings, lame, sprung from eggs [Helena], living and dying on alternate days [Castor and Pollux], is a matter of almost childish craziness. But on top of impudence it is that adulterous relations between them should be invented, and by and by feuds and hatred, and that there should be divinities of thefts and crimes. A god is it, for one mortal to help another, and this is the road to eternal glory; it is by this that the great men of Rome passed, it is by this now that, with the step of gods, strides with his sons the greatest ruler of all time, Vespasian Augustus, devoted as he is to the service of the weary world.

It is not only the worldly wise courtier who speaks here, but we see clearly, how, in Roman paganism, the Olympians being pretty well used up, not much remained but *emperor-cult*; it was indeed an obvious development. Pliny continues:

This is the most ancient custom of rendering thanks to those who deserve well, that they enroll such men among divinities.... Who in the interpretation must not confess that it is absurd [*inridendum*, absurd to believe] that that highest being, whatever it is, cares for human affairs? Or must we not believe, that it [the supreme being] is stained by so gloomy and manifold service?...Others on the Capitol deceive and swear falsely by the Jupiter who propels lightning....Still mortal men...find an intermediate divinity, that there might not be even any obvious conjecture about what god is, for in all the world, in all places, and at all hours, by the utterances of all, *Fortune* alone is invoked and named [we observed the same note in Pausanias], alone is accused, alone made the defendant, alone is thought about,

alone is praised, alone subjected to criticism. And when she is worshipped with abusive words, slippery of movement, but esteemed by most people even blind, roving, inconstant, unreliable, changeful, and a patroness of those who are unworthy. She alone has charged to her all outgo and all income, and in all the book-keeping of mankind she alone determines both pages of the ledger, and to such a degree are we in the power of a controlling lottery, that the lottery itself takes the place of god, by which [lottery] god is proven indefinite.

CHAPTER IV

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Among the most careful studies of Clement has been that of the late Dr Charles Bigg, Bampton Lecturer at Oxford, whose lectures were published there in 1886. Bigg died in 1908. I wish the data which he uses to furnish a cultural background for the Alexandria of Septimius Severus were more numerous and more illuminating than they actually are. That the translators of the Septuagint had Platonic leanings may be questioned, I dare say. I would not characterize Plutarch as "a cultivated gnostic" (*The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, 1886, p. 29). I cannot agree with Bigg in conceiving Clement as "turgid and verbose" (p. 47), or as a rhetorician, for thought, proof, metaphysics, doctrine, predominated in his intellectual personality. But, setting aside many minor points of dissent, I am least able to subscribe to the following estimate of the British scholar: "In his desire to win back the sectaries [*i.e.* the Gnostics] he draped Christianity in a Gnostic garb" (p. 84), or when he makes Clement a kind of sire of Neoplatonism (p. 64). Plotinus, I am quite sure, would have rejected the imputation of such dependency with that gentle irony of which he was a master. On the other hand, we must heed the following utterance of the Bampton Lecturer, viz. that Gnosticism in the second century constituted a greater danger to the Christian church than did Arianism later on.

THE general aim of these studies, as I have intimated before, is to examine with particular care the contact and conflict of Christianity with the pagan world, a contact and conflict by no means of courts and lictors only. While the sources and documents especially available for our purpose are not as numerous as we might wish, they are, for the concluding part of

the second century after Christ, bound up with two names particularly. These are Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian of Carthage; each of them a pronounced character, but differing widely. They exhibit, each in his turn, much of what was then typical and urgent in the Greek church and in the Latin.

Both are occupied, in the main, with three concerns and bodies of interest: First, the pagan world; second, the Christian church, then beginning to assume the epithet of Catholic (the general or universal), though without a trace of headship for the see of Rome, the term being determined, then, entirely by the universal acceptance of the essential points of Christian faith. The appropriation of this particular adjective, *Catholic*, was most probably due to that which we may call the third concern of the patristic authors named before, viz. the many and dangerous heresies gravely and constantly threatening the church without and within, manifold movements and systems and cults, forms of cosmological and theosophical speculation in the main, and claiming a superiority of higher knowledge by the haughty and self-assertive terms of Gnostics and Gnosticism.

It was, I believe, to clarify and determine its own ground and foundation, as over against this dangerous theosophy claiming to be the highest form of Christianity, that the Christian church was driven to define its most precious possessions. Many points, it would seem, of what we have received as the Apostles' Creed, both of the first and second articles, as well as of their connection and interdependence, may have been formulated in, or in consequence of, that struggle and that necessary self-definition. Both Clement and

Tertullian flourished in the reign of Septimius Severus, from 193 A.D. on, and their most important works seem to have been then written. The body of writings left by them is so large that each will require a separate treatment.

My aim in this study must be coupled with a certain self-denial. While striving to present to the readers of this work what is characteristic and significant, I shall abstain from generalizations, which, while they dazzle the uninformed, are too often unaccompanied by sound and searching mastery of detail. As far as possible, Clement is to speak for himself. The Greek text of the Oxford edition of his writings (1869) covers some 1200 pages more or less. Clement taught, and preached, too, in one of the greatest—we may confidently say, in *the* greatest—centres of Greek culture then existing within the Roman Empire. The enormous range of his classic citations has tempted some scholars to suggest that he resorted to anthologies, and, in the domain of philosophy and general erudition, to certain current collections called doxographies[1]. It is quite undeniable that Clement often reminds us, in his surveys of the data of learning or letters, of Diogenes Laertius and Athenaeus.

But let us now come a little closer to him. His trend was that of the student and of the searcher after soul-satisfaction. In the introduction to the first book of his *Stromateis*, he calls these notes (*ὑπομνήματα*) something

> treasured up against his old age, a remedy of forgetfulness, an image simply and an outline of those discourses and of those men endowed with clearness and soul-power whom I have been

[1] See the Prolegomena of Herm. Diels to his *Doxographi Graeci*, Berlin, 1879.

deemed worthy to listen to, blessed men and really noteworthy. Of these the one was in Greece, the Ionian, another in Magna Graecia, another of them was of Coelesyria, another from Egypt, and others in different parts of the East; and of this section, the one was of the Assyrians, the other in Palestine, a Hebrew by origin. But when I had fallen in with the last one [the Christian ex-Stoic of Alexandria] (in power he proved to be the first), I came to rest in Egypt, having hunted after things concealed from my vision. (*Stromateis*, I, 11.)

Pantaenus then was the mediating influence which connected Clement's Greek philosophy with the apostles. "But"—the reader will please carefully note the expression chosen by Clement—"the men who are preserving the true tradition of the blessed teaching *directly from* [εὐθύς] Peter and James, John and Paul, the holy Apostles, son receiving it from father—few are equal to their fathers—they came indeed, with God's help, to me too, destined to deposit that ancestral and apostolic seed."

The *Protrepticus* (Hortatory Discourse) of Clement need not detain us very long. It was addressed "to the Greeks." It presents as absurd and contemptible the idolatry of popular tradition and practice, and speaks of the pantomimic ritual practised there (τὰ ὄργια) of the gods as morally despicable; exactly as from Lucian we learned how the Olympian legends furnished current entertainment on the stage.

The sorcerers now boast that the demons [the pagan gods] are servants of their own wickedness, having enrolled them as slaves to themselves, namely, these whom they have made bondsmen to themselves by constraint, by means of their incantations; further then there are weddings and cohabitings and childbirths of gods recorded, and adulteries sung and feastings travestied and guffaws of laughter introduced at drink, which urge me to cry out aloud, even though I desire to hold my peace. Out upon the godlessness! *You have made a stage*

of heaven and the deity has become a stageplay to you, and holiness you have travestied with a mask of supernatural beings, having made a parody of true piety by superstition (*Protrepticus*, 58).

The moral indignation with which he speaks of Antinous, the deified concubine of the Emperor Hadrian, renders him positively eloquent:

> And another god in Egypt, almost also among the Greeks, the Emperor of Rome by way of worship [σεβασμίως] has set up as god, his supremely fair boy-concubine Antinous, whom he consecrated in the way Zeus did Ganymede, for concupiscence is not easily checked when it has no fear; and during holy nights men now worship Antinous, nights which his [imperial] lover who spent them jointly in waking, knew were base. Why recountest to me as god him, who has been honoured through prostitution?...Do not act the despot, O thou mere man, over comeliness, and do not deal wantonly with the youth in his bloom; keep it pure, that it may be comely. Become a king of comeliness, not a despot; remain free; then I shall spread abroad your comeliness, because you have kept the image pure; then I shall worship true beauty, which is the archetype of the fair ones (49).

Here then we have, in the Presbyter of Alexandria, a distinct echo and reminiscence of Plato's *Phaedrus*. And so, too, the men of the pagan world adorn their chambers with paintings of their pagan gods in attitudes of unnatural lust[1], or of Ares and Aphrodite enmeshed together, or of Zeus and Leda on sealrings. Quite aptly, as Paul did (Rom. i, 25: "And worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator"), Clement likewise conceives paganism summarily thus: "I seek God, not the works of God" (*Protrepticus*, 67) or: "But thou conceivest not God, but it is the heavens that you worship" (81). For Clement's homiletic vein, see particularly 83, 84, 105, 107, 113, 115, 117, 120.

[1] *Loc. cit.* 60.

But even in this shorter and we may say more popular work Greek philosophy enters in again and again, for in the devoted and enthusiastic pre-Christian period of his life many elements and aspirations of it found a permanent lodgment in his soul, elements which he earnestly strove to endow with spiritual content or spiritual significance, terms and conceptions which he endeavoured outright to dovetail into the structure of his Christian theology—Platonic matter chiefly. Now Plato's monotheism, to my vision and judgment, is a very vague and vapoury something, with all the dithyrambic passages in *Republic*, *Phaedrus*, *Phaedo*, etc.; his god is a being attainable but rarely to the rapturous or ecstatic vision which is vouchsafed to a very small élite of philosophers—no genuine worship can be directed at, no sustaining spiritual support can be derived from, so metaphysical a being. That deeper experience of the essential impotence and insolvency of the soul, which turns to God in Christ as the hart panteth after the water-brooks—this, I say, is an experience, which, as an experience, unless I am mistaken, is unrecorded in Clement's extant works.

At bottom he is academic and bookish; truth is dear to him as gained as the apex or consummation in a long or elaborate process of study and reflection—and there is no good reason to consider as non-authentic book VIII of the *Stromateis*. He actually apostrophizes Plato and incidentally cites from the latter's *Timaeus*[1]: "How then must we trace God [ἐξιχνευτέον τὸν θεόν] to Plato? For to find the father and maker of this universe is a severe task, and, having found, to make utterance to all is impossible" (*Protrepticus*, 68). We

[1] 28 C.

must add here at once that Clement (like Philo Judaeus of Alexandria, who flourished 40 A.D.) was sincerely convinced that Plato owed the best of his theology and cosmogony to Moses, as he owed his geometry to Egypt, his astronomy to Babylon; all of which Philonian and Old Testament doctrine, and even New Testament, Clement, in all his works, over and over again, dubs "the barbarian philosophy," we would say the non-Greek. So, too, he cites with warm approbation from Kleanthes, the second head of the Stoic sect, the famous Hymn on the Good which Clement actually calls "a true theology." And so, too, in a fervid passage on salvation and regeneration: "Let us strive to do good by way of union with the monadic essence," a harsh metaphysical term in a Christian setting. These things are like little stones in the bread we are chewing. He also (like Tertullian) calls attention to the marvellous spread of Christianity in a comparatively short time; he urges the universality of the precepts of Christian ethics[1].

Of the *Paedagogus* I have even less to say. It is a body of monitions, mainly practical and concrete monitions, to assimilate our actual life and conduct to Christ[2], who was "God stainless in the form of man, a servant to his father's will, the Word [λόγος, John i] God, he who is in the Father, who is from the right hand of the Father,...who in the flesh, displayed the same eminence both of practical and theoretical life." We see Aristotle's terminology asserting itself in close juxtaposition to St John's Gospel. In this ethical treatise Stoic parallels and terms also intrude.

In a way this work has special elements of interest

[1] *Protrepticus*, 72, 88, 110. [2] *Paedagogus*, I, 4, 102.

for the antiquarian, for it definitely descends to the concrete things of life and the customs of life, such as the table and gluttony, with an interesting allusion to the Love-feast of the Christian church as well as to the diet of Pythagoras, a discourse on luxury and the simple life; or, he says that Plato, as a devotee of the latter "fanned into flame the fire of Hebraic philosophy." On drinking he discourses, beginning with 1 Timothy v, 23, with many incidental observations and suggestions. His faculty of association and of reminiscence indeed is unfathomable, and, we must add, somewhat incalculable and irrepressible. Famous vintages are enumerated, also many national and tribal customs. Further on he takes up domestic furniture and equipment, feasts and hospitality, jests and witticisms, foul speech, wisdom in social intercourse, wreaths and unguents, with many illustrations drawn from the classical writers of Greece. Again he discusses sleep, and the aims of wedlock, with curious parallels from Leviticus, to which Plato, he claims, was beholden; he also calls Plato "a disciple, in his Philebus, of the non-Greek philosophy"; on other forms of luxury, as in dress and textile fabrics, on the purple dye, on footwear, on gold and precious stones, with special reference to women[1].

These topics are continued in book III. He discusses there personal embellishment, with citations from the later Attic comedy, citations reminding one of Athenaeus descanting on certain forms of effeminacy and luxury which destroyed Greece; on dandies and the artificial and unnatural smoothness of face cultivated by these. His reference to nature and the natural

[1] *Paedagogus*, II, 1, 6, 11, 16, 18, 30, 32, 35, 40, 45, 49, 53, 61, 88, 91, 100, 104, 114, 116, 118.

hirsuteness of males, as in the case of the lion, is quite in the Stoic vein. Next he takes up human association and social intercourse, baths; says that the Christian alone is rich, that the simple life is a good *viaticum* in the Christian's pilgrimage. There follow gymnasia and physical training; then he presents summaries and surveys of Christian life, generally with ample Scriptural quotation and in the spirit of the New Testament. We may lay aside this concise syllabus with the remark that Clement's practical Christianity is more distinctly and genuinely Christian than his theoretical Christianity and what we may call his systematic theology[1].

But the greater and the more important part of this study must needs deal with the greatest and most important of his extant works, the eight books of notes and musings called by him *Stromateis* (not *Stromata*). It is an odd term. As to the word itself, the Atticist lexicographer Pollux[2], of Naucratis in Egypt (by the bye, a close contemporary of our own Clement) says: "What the older [Greeks] called στρωματόδεσμα [*stromato-desma*, coverlet-binders, rug-holders] these the later [Greeks] called στρωματεῖς, in which, as the term indicates, they stored their coverlets [τὰ στρώματα ἀπετίθεντο], but of course also their other articles of dress"—something, then, like the modern clothes-presses, cedar chests, and the like. Clearly, then, these collections or receptacles of the Alexandrian presbyter were meant to contain a great many things, a very great variety of things often somewhat unrelated to one another, every kind, every item in the total, of Clement's spiritual, cultural, philosophical garments or

[1] *Op. cit.* III, 4, 13, 24, 26, 34, 37, 49.
[2] *Onomasticon*, VII, 79.

other equipment were there to be stored away, and found there when wanted, if for no other one, then for himself in his old age. They were, in a way, pandects of his Christian philosophy. The Presbyter himself[1] urges the varied and composite character of these collections as he is aware of his deeply ingrained habit of free and untrammelled passing from topic to topic (διεστρωμένα ἀπ' ἄλλου εἰς ἄλλο μετίοντα), turning a kaleidoscope as we might say.

Of St Paul there are rather more than five hundred citations in the extant works of Clement (of James but seven, of Peter twenty-four). Dr Bigg indeed[2] speaks of the "inferiority of St Paul" in Clement. And indeed it must be candidly admitted that, as to the great Apostle's conception of Christ crucified as supreme foolishness to the Greeks (as we see that it proved to be when we read the scornful slurs of a Celsus, for instance), we cannot fairly fail to see that his conception does not appeal to Clement. As I understand him, his great aim and incessant striving—we may plainly call it a futile or fatuous aim—was, to make of the *Logos* a finality, an apex, a didactic and philosophical complement and completion of the best spiritual or quasi-spiritual strivings and utterances to be found in the Greek writers, whether of *belles lettres* or philosophy, from Homer and Hesiod onward. Besides, many of these authors—we must not forget it—were themselves the stock and substance of the current schools and schooling, with *grammaticus* and *rhetor*, and it was immaterial whether the pupils were Christian, Jew or Gentile; there was, in fact, no other education, there was no other culture.

[1] *Stromateis*, IV, 4.

[2] *Platonists of Alexandria*, p. 53.

When we survey the data furnished by the indexes of the Oxford edition which I have used (1869), we find that, of the poets, Homer comes first, Hesiod is often cited, Pindar has a conspicuous rank, the moral intensity and dialectic restlessness of Euripides made him much more available for Clement than Sophocles and Aeschylus. The Pseudosybilline quotations, with their but slightly veiled condemnation of paganism, make us pause; Clement was no great critic, not even a fairly careful critic.

Of the philosophers, Plato is foremost; no other one of this class approaches him in the frequency of allusion, quotation or parallel. Heraclitus (the real sire of Stoic cosmology, though he lived long before Zeno) is also much used, then Aristotle. The Stoics collectively are cited some dozen times, Zeno and Cleanthes not very often, and Chrysippus, the prolific and authoritative third head of that school, not at all. Of the representatives of cosmic speculation besides Heraclitus, there are notable Empedocles, Democritus, Epicurus; we marvel at the slight use he made of the most spiritual of them all, Anaxagoras. One is almost tempted to assume that Clement was himself a grammaticus before he became a presbyter, at least he had the love and, to some extent, the habits and consciousness of a grammaticus.

This brings us at once to that literary and didactic trait in Clement which perhaps is more striking and odd to the Christian student than any other; I mean the direct way in which he places the Greek classics in juxtaposition with the Old and New Testaments. Thus he passes from Proverbs to Pindar[1], from Proverbs to

[1] *Stromateis*, I, 181.

Heraclitus of Ephesus, and again from the Ephesian thinker to Habakkuk ii, 4: "The just shall live by his faith." From our Lord's saying: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John xx, 29), he goes on—to what do you think? To the irresistible charm of the mythical sirens. In his analysis of faith (πίστις), he takes up Thales and Anaxagoras and their fundamental tenets. He has indeed an itch for what we may call in a very loose way psychological parallels, an itch which he never curbs or represses, and the point of contact is quite often very faint or elusive. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that Erasmus did much better work in his *Adagia*. The sonship of Christ, his surpassing nobility of source and descent—this reminds Clement of a passage in Plato's *Phaedrus* (279 B): "O dear Pan and all ye other gods who dwell here, grant to me to become comely within," etc. We indeed shake our heads. From Christ he passes to Epicharmus. Homer (*sic*) foretold or foreshadowed the believer; from Stoic ethics he passes to Paul's whole armour of God[1]. We must not permit ourselves to yield to strong emotion nor to concupiscence (the male and female elements of the soul), but keep them subject to the rational faculty—good Platonic doctrine this, reminding Clement of St Paul (Gal. iii, 28), "there is neither male nor female"—but patience! The excellent Paul "holds it more Platonic [*sic*] that the soul, being divine from above, having been rendered feminine through desire, should come hither [*i.e.* on earth] into generation and into passing away" (III, 93)—the pre-existence and incarnation of souls foisted upon St Paul.

[1] *Op. cit.* II, 8, 9, 14, 22, 24, 102, 109.

We call Clement a Greek Father, but in many of his utterances he is more of a Greek than a Father. Pythagoras, seeming to call God alone wise, reminds him of St Paul (Rom. xvi, 27: "To God only wise, be glory," etc.). From a passage in Plato's *Phaedo* dealing with bliss, he goes on to the Beatitudes of our Lord. From Paul (1 Cor. iv, 9, 11–13) he passes to Plato's *Republic*. He cites types of heroism from the Old Testament and from Greece. In speaking of the elect, he cites Greek poets for epithets. In short, the loftier and finer things in his culture were so deeply intertwined with his spiritual aspirations and convictions that, in him, Hellenism and Christianity appear in a union, incongruous and artificial withal, but no less real in his particular and subjective personality[1].

Let us now look at what he says of the church, also at his general theology and Christology. He plainly says[2] that the actual Christians in their preponderant majority never had any philosophical training or even general culture, some of them were even unlettered men. He is, somehow, obsessed by the characteristic and ineradicable desire to conceive Christian revelation as a kind of "philosophy." He intimates that there are among actual Christians those who are fond of finding fault (φιλεγκλήμονες) with philosophy in this connection. On the other hand, he says: "We call brothers those who have been regenerated by the same word" (II, 41). We observe also that a regular cycle of lessons from Scripture to be read in churches was fully established (περικοπαί). So, citing a few words from Isaiah i, 11, he adds: "And the entire lesson" (καὶ πᾶσα ἡ περι-

[1] *Op. cit.* IV, 9, 37, 52, 118–124, 171.
[2] *Op. cit.* I, 99.

κοπή). In the *Stromateis*, III, 80, he cites from 1 Corinthians vii, 39, 40: "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth;...after my judgment"; then he quotes Romans vii, 4: "Ye also are become dead to the law" "*in the preceding lesson*" (ἐπὶ τῆς προτέρας περικοπῆς). Obviously, then, the contents and sequence of readings in a definite cycle of the church-year were well established and familiar to all Christians[1]. He refers to 1 Corinthians vi, 1 sqq. as "a very great pericope" (*Stromateis*, VII, 84); elsewhere: "In each pericope" (VI, 131). He calls the church the personal bride of Christ. The Gnostics often used "the Gospel according to the Egyptians," but he sets this aside as not within the true canon of the four genuine and authentic Gospels[2].

We may here set down the sum total of citations, as given in the index of volume III of the Oxford edition of Clement. For Matthew I counted 329, for Mark 40, for Luke 143, for John 130, which four he also designates as "*the four Gospels handed down to us*" (III, 93). Alluding to the front seats reserved for the dignitaries of the church, he says that, in a spiritual sense, one may be a presbyter and a deacon without having been formally chosen or elected (χειροτονούμενος, VI, 106). "The spiritual body, that is to say, the holy church" (VII, 87).

We now turn to the expansion of the Christian church and so also to persecution and martyrdom. In leading up to the universality of the Christian church he cites first the parallel of the schools of

[1] Cf. A. C. Hall, s.v. *Pericope*, in the *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*.

[2] *Stromateis*, III, 49, 66.

Greek philosophy and the founders and leaders thereof, such as Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, and others,

who persuaded their own sectaries [αἱρετιστάς] only,...but the word of our teacher did not remain in Judaea alone, as philosophy did in Greece, but was poured out [ἐχύθη] throughout all the inhabited world, persuading Greeks at the same time and barbarians, by tribes [at a time], by villages, by entire cities, transforming entire households, and specifically each of those who gave ear, and of the philosophers themselves, actually to the truth....As for our own teaching, even with the first announcement thereafter, kings [the usual term for the Roman emperors] and autocrats have been checking it, and those who hold office and leadership in parts, with all their mercenaries, in addition also those of the ignorant men who make a dead set against us and try to annihilate it with all their might, *but it* [the Christian teaching] *flourishes even more*; for it does not die like human teaching or waste away like a feeble gift, for no gift of God is feeble but endures unchecked as one of which it has been prophesied that it would be persecuted to the end (IV, 167).

On martyrs and martyrdom Clement specifically discourses (IV, 13 sqq.): "We call martyrdom consummation" (τελείωσιν). Elsewhere he calls it "the witnessing for the Lord through blood" (VI, 44), and that such a portal of death is the beginning of real life, citing also Plato's *Phaedo* (107 C): "If death were the end of all," etc., evidently as a very familiar passage. "Full then is all the church of those who have prepared themselves for the death that is to enliven them into Christ, prepared their life long," both men and women[1]. He gathers together the pertinent warning of our Lord from Luke xii, 8, from Mark viii, 38, from Matthew x, 32, and again from Luke xii, 11 sqq. But no one should spontaneously offer himself to the courts[2]: "They persecute us then, not having found us out to be unrighteous, but presuming from the

[1] Cf. also *Stromateis*, IV. 68.

[2] *Op. cit.* IV, 77.

mere fact that we are Christians, that we do wrong in our life" (IV, 79).

In his conception of God, the influence of Philo and of Plato is abundantly suggested. "The non-composite Being, which is neither associated with matter, nor is matter, nor from matter" (II, 45). "Worshipping the God of all through the high-priest, the Word" (II, 45). "The highest contemplation is that endowed with vision" (Philo, Plato, II, 47). The first conversion and repentance is the only genuine one[1], a curious doctrine. Obedience or disobedience to the divine law is in our power (ἐφ ἡμῖν, the Stoic term), because, as he argues, "only voluntary acts are subject to judgment" (II, 59 *fin.*). Here he cites Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, III, 2. Salvation is the will of God, *i.e.* for those who repent[2]. God is not responsible for our choice of living or for evil (καὶ ἔστιν ὁ θεὸς ἀναίτιος; cf. Plato, *Republic*, II, 379).

The four canonic virtues of the Greeks, *i.e.* Fortitude, Wisdom, Self-control, Justice, are recognized. The Deity is without wants and without emotions (ἀπαθές), where Stoicism asserted itself[3]. "God is beyond our definition and is not an object of our knowledge, but the Son is both Wisdom and Knowledge and Truth and whatever else is kindred to this" (IV, 156). "God is without any beginning and is the beginning of all, the complete creative force of beginning" (IV, 162). Elsewhere, as a student of Philo, he discourses on the sacred Tetragrammaton (*Jahve*) "which is interpreted: 'He that is and He that will be.'" Elsewhere of God: "He who in unborn identity is Himself alone" (IV, 137). "The philosophy of divine revelation establishes and corroborates Providence; if

[1] *Op. cit.* II, 56. [2] *Op. cit.* II, 60, 73. [3] *Op. cit.* II, 81.

this be done away with, the plan concerning the Saviour appears a mere myth" (I, 52). "The soul of a righteous man is an image of God,...in which the leader of all mortal and immortal beings their king and creator is enshrined and set up for worship" (VII, 16).

In his Christology, where Plato and the Stoics did not as a rule intrude, we have fairly the conception of St John's Gospel, and of St Paul. "The Saviour always saves and always works [John v, 17], as he sees the Father" (I, 12). "Those who were before the incarnation of the Word" (I, 81). He cordially appropriates Paul's familiar declaration of the Crucified, the "power of God, and the wisdom of God," in meeting the dissent of certain ones "wise in their own conceit" (δοκησισόφοι); he never honours the Gnostics with the name Gnostics, of which more further on (IV, 107). Of Christ: "On this account the Word has been called Alpha and Omega" (Rev. i, 8, 9; *Stromateis*, IV, 157). Christ, the Word, *is not the Logos of emanation* (οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ προφορικός, *Stromateis*, V, 6). "The Word is the discloser of the peculiar essence of the Father" (V, 34). "The Principle and First-fruits of existing things, itself without time and without beginning, the Son" (VII, 2). I close this topic with a passage of a peculiar loftiness and fervour: "Most perfect indeed and most holy and most sovereign and most commanding and most royal and most beneficent is the nature of the Son, which is most closely attached to the only Omnipotent One. This is the greatest Excellence, which ordains all things in accordance with the will of the Father and pilots the universe in the best manner, working all things with untiring and irreducible power" (VII, 5).

As to the exegesis of Clement, he, like Philo before him, is utterly steeped in that vicious and fanciful practice of allegorizing, and of sniffing mysterious or hidden meanings accessible only to the esoteric expert, a principle infinitely elastic and infinitely elusive. What I cite of this is to serve chiefly as a deterrent example. The word enigma is derived from the verb *αἰνίττομαι*, to express, or to suggest, intend or convey, a concealed or cryptic meaning, and this same verb Clement uses over and over again in his exegetical digressions. When our Lord says (Matt. viii, 20): "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not *where to lay his head*"—this means, says our speculative presbyter, that "the Head of Existence, the good and gentle Word, rests only in the believer, who is utterly separated from the others who are called beasts by Scripture." The Pillar of Fire signifies that God cannot be represented in an image (*τὸ ἀνεικόνιστον τοῦ θεοῦ*, I, 163). The rich man who is compared with the camel (Matt. xix, 24) that cannot pass through the eye of a needle—what is the meaning? That the rich man is unable to pursue wisdom[1]. By "birds of the air" (Matt. viii, 20) are meant those "who have the faculty [*sic*] of winging themselves to the understanding of the heavenly Word" (IV, 31).

Fanciful to a degree is his exposition of the familiar Beatitude (Matt. v, 4): "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall *be comforted*" (*παρακληθήσονται*), for Philo's disciple in allegorical and other subjective lore injects a new meaning into that compound: "*They shall attend at the summons*" (*εἰς τὴν κλῆσιν παρέσονται*), in some Platonic sense, at a new incarnation of souls

[1] *Op. cit.* II, 22.

and the incidental allotment of lives[1]. In Matthew v, 25, "agree with thine adversary quickly"—what is the adversary (ἀντίδικος)? "Not the body as some [probably Gnostics] claim, but Satan and those who resemble him, who is 'in the way with us' by means of men who imitate his deeds in this earthly life." What barnacles of exegetical conceit have not, in the history of the Christian church, attached themselves to the Word of God, the ship of life and vessel of eternity!

But all that we have hitherto said of the *Stromateis*, of the Alexandrine presbyter and teacher of the neophytes, is brought in by him *en passant* merely. It is time now that we take up the chief purport of his notes and rambling discussion. What is it? It is to set forth his own *gnosis* and his own standard and ideals as a Christian thinker. My readers will please observe, that in his skirmishing with the Gnostics, a running polemic carried through the first seven books, the terms γνῶσις and γνωστικός are consistently withheld from the Gnostics and as consistently, nay, rigorously, reserved for himself and for his own standard of Christian (Platonizing) thought and speculation. He surveys in a manner his own life and learning, he defines himself, so to speak, against every force, attitude or thesis which was not congenial to him. The peculiar syncretism of culture, philosophy, morality, and Christian belief is here most fully revealed, uttered, emphasized, iterated. To arrange this matter in a series or system of paragraphs, I shall not undertake, but content myself by presenting to my readers certain features which are characteristic and insistent.

From the Jewish thinkers, Aristobulos and Philo,

[1] *Op. cit.* IV, 37.

Clement, as noted above, had appropriated the following thesis: That Plato and even Pythagoras had taken over many of their doctrines from Moses[1]. And so Clement calls Plato "the philosopher from the Hebrews" (I, 10). True philosophers (and here Clement is uttering his own standards and ideals) are they who are striving for the contemplation of the Good itself through knowledge; God is "that which is" or "He who is" (τὸ ὄν, ὁ ὤν, Philonism and Platonism, *Stromateis*, I, 166). The Unity of God is referred to as taught in two specific passages in Plato[2]. Unbelievers remind him of a passage in Plato. Plato is cited in a discourse on Faith[3]. The highest felicity according to Plato is "assimilation to God" (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ, II, 100; cf. Plato, *Theaetetus*, 176): "The flight [from the material world] is assimilation to God as far as possible, and assimilation is, to become righteous and pious, coupled with understanding." Even the Trinity is deduced from Plato[4]. *Time* came only with creation[5]. It is a large subject, but we have no space to pursue it further.

Again, Clement often appears a Stoic, that is to say, the terminology of Stoical ethics is fairly his own, a tool with which he operates. Thus of purpose or design (προαίρεσις, ὁρμή, I, 84); intellectual assent (συγκατάθεσις, *passim*); choice and avoidance in action (αἵρεσις καὶ φυγή, II, 12); anticipation and comprehension in cognition (πρόληψις and κατάληψις, II, 17); the manifold excellencies of the (ideal) sage; the ten elements which constitute man: Body, soul, the five senses, the

[1] Cf. *Stromateis*, I, 150.
[2] *Op. cit.* I, 182.
[3] *Op. cit.* II, 15, 18.
[4] *Stromateis*, V, 108.
[5] Cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 37, and, from this source, Philo, *passim*.

voice, the power of propagation, reason; charity for others (τὸ κοινωνικόν, II, 73). He who has one virtue has them all on account of their interdependence. He refuses, however, to follow the Stoics in their pantheistic identification of God and Nature[1]. Further "to yield to the passions is uttermost slavery" (II, 101). He admires the doctrine of the Stoics which asserts the autonomy of the soul as over against the body; over and over he cites the "sovereign power" (viz. reason, τὸ ἡγεμονικόν). Preferred and not preferred things[2]. Intelligence extended through the universe[3]. These data could be greatly extended.

So equipped, then, and taking with him such material elements out of the nobler schools into Christianity when he accepted it, he really endeavours (as I have already intimated) to make of Christianity a kind of academic process, a philosophy *par excellence*, for which the best elements of human culture, especially in philosophy and its ancillary disciplines, might serve as a propaedeutic. What he personally had gone through was to be typical.

That the spirit and essence of our Lord's redemption, as well as His self-revelation and teaching on earth, differ *toto caelo* from this academic syncretism of the Alexandrine presbyter-philosopher I need hardly even use words to observe. What men did he prize and assert as precious and dominant in this academic striving and ideals? He rejects the theory that philosophy owes its origin to the Evil One. Evidently there were then Christians of narrower vision, who claimed, perhaps from concrete instances of certain representa-

[1] *Stromateis*, II, 19, 50, 80, 101. [2] *Op. cit.* IV, 19, 164.
[3] *Op. cit.* V, 155.

tions of philosophy, that this pursuit grievously injured human life by breeding fictitious notions and evil works. These simpler Christians (whom Clement keenly disliked) demanded but faith and belief, pure and simple. The universality of his own culture and concern is for him a foundation which he will not abandon to the clamour of these narrower brethren. In such citation he views himself as "a much-experienced tracker of truth" (I, 44), a versatile touchstone indeed. According to Clement, exegesis of apostles and prophets calls for men professionally equipped for lucidity of instruction (ἐντέχνους); dialectic therefore is for such men a requisite. The operation of reason is accomplished conformably to God; he abruptly cites John i, 3 (the Word): "and without him was not anything made that was made." It is quite plain here, that his Stoic inheritance and prepossession get the better of sober and objective reading of St John's Gospel. In Clement we may as well be prepared for that sort of thing at any point, at any time. The believer, indeed, must not be intellectually indolent[1].

On the other hand, he dwells on Colossians ii, 4, 8: "This I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.... Beware lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." The power of God, not the wisdom of men, is Paul's dominant concern. But the Alexandrine scholar insists that St Paul's warning refers only to anti-spiritual systems like that of Epicurus, which denied Providence, and to other materialistic theories of the universe[2].

[1] *Op. cit.* I, 18, 20, 43, 51.

[2] *Op. cit.* I, 52.

He is fond of the vicious thesis that "one must conceal the wisdom spoken in mystery which the Son of God taught" (I, 55), the same, however, of whom we read: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matt. xi, 25). Clement holds that the choice of the good and the turning away from the evil is "*in our own power*," a matter of self-determination (αὐτεξούσιον) —hardly in consonance, I fear, with the moral experience of our human kind—"in order that it may show the true philosophy transmitted through the Son" (I, 89). General culture is a coefficient or contributory factor to rouse or train the soul toward the intelligible things (πρὸς τὰ νοητά, I, 93 *fin.*), a reminiscence, or better, a cherished element preserved of his Platonic pursuits[1]. This propaedeutic is for him an equipment to maintain himself against the heresies[2]—he means the Gnostics. Like Philo (whom he follows more frequently than he names him), Clement conceives Moses as one who in his making and training absorbed and appropriated all then extant culture and "philosophy"; from Moses this tradition passed to Jews, from Jews to Phoenicians, from Phoenicians to Greeks[3].

In discussing faith (πίστις), his manner of procedure is essentially analytical-psychological, and barely touches upon what is the specifically Christian essence of this great subject. He even quotes as experts on "Faith" such thinkers as Theophrastus and Aristotle, nay, Epicurus even[4]. Although his Christian conception will assert itself against these futile parallels, he

[1] Cf. Plato, *Republic*, VII, 529–531.
[2] *Stromateis*, I, 99.
[3] *Op. cit.* I, 153.
[4] *Op. cit.* II, 9–15.

admits at the end of these reflections that faith is more elemental (στοιχειωδεστέρα) or essential than any other one of the virtues which lead to higher insight or γνῶσις[1], as is the breathing of air for the maintaining of physical life. And still he cites, too, St Paul (1 Cor. viii, 1): "Knowledge puffeth up" (II, 48). Again and again he utters as the summit to which his superior insight is to lead him: "The greatest contemplation, that endowed with the faculty of a [transcendental] intuition [ἡ ἐποπτικὴ], the real knowledge which proves to be unchangeable [ἀμετάπτωτος, a term used by both Plato and Aristotle] through reason" (II, 47). In that attainment, distinctly possible for a very small élite only, the man of deeper insight is he "who by way of image and assimilation imitates God as far as it is possible"—a Platonism in the main, as we have suggested before[2]. The peace with God, certainly, which passeth all understanding, is not, and cannot in any wise be conceived as, the summit or apex of any academic or cogitative process whatsoever.

Platonic, too, it is, when in his discussion of absolute celibacy demanded by the Encratites, precursors these of monastic vows—when in that discussion Clement designates the body as "the tomb of the soul" (III, 77). His Platonism in fact crowds and grips his Christianity again and again in a manner which appears to us forced and fanciful, and is indeed painful to us who never had to disabuse our soul from that cocoon of Platonism, which to Clement is much more than a general propaedeutic of his logical and spiritual faculties. "Reasonably then Plato too says that the god who has the faculty

[1] *Op. cit.* II, 31.
[2] *Op. cit.* II, 97; cf. Plato, *Republic*, X, 613 B.

of contemplating the ideas will live among men" (IV, 155). "For when the soul, having risen beyond incarnation, is by itself and associates with the Ideas, such as is the eminent one in the *Theaetetus*[1], becoming like an angel, now will be with Christ, being endowed with the faculty forever of contemplation in gazing upon the will of God"—really: "A wise man he alone, but they like shadows flit" (Homer, *Odyssey*, x, 495). "For the dead bury their own dead" (IV, 155). Let my readers patiently ponder over this naïve grafting of Christianity on Platonism (or of grafting Platonism on Christianity). I may aid the effect by withholding all comment.

Death, too, is conceived in the Platonic manner. Clement begins indeed with St Paul (2 Cor. v, 9): "Wherefore we labour that, whether present or absent [*i.e.* in the body] we may be accepted of him." But, after quoting from Epicharmus and from Pindar, Clement goes on: "The soul which chose the best life from God and righteousness, exchanges heaven for earth" (IV, 167). "The idea is the conceit of God" (V, 16). Like Philo, Clement interprets a certain passage in Plato's *Republic*[2], a passage from the vision of Er, describing the punishment inflicted on a tyrant after death in the realm of souls, by presenting the ministers of retributive justice as angels, and citing Psalm civ, 4: "Who maketh his angels spirits, his ministers a flaming fire."

What we may call his characteristic syncretism, often verging close on deism, is set forth in the following: "For clearly, I think, he revealed the one and only God, comprehended by the Greeks in a gentile manner

[1] P. 173 C. [2] X, 615.

[ἐθνικῶς], by the Jews in Jewish manner, and in a novel and spiritual manner by us" (VI, 41). "The ordinary Christians [οἱ πολλοί], as children fear the spooks so they fear the Greek philosophy, being afraid lest it may lead them astray" (VI, 80). With Clement personally, indeed, *gnosis* is something more exalted than *pistis*, and we are well aware that mere *belief* does not rank with *faith*. Citing from the Shepherd of Hermas, the Alexandrine presbyter goes on to say that "Scripture is clear to all as taken by the bare reading, and that this is the *belief* which holds the sequence of the sounds, on which account also the literal reading is subjected to allegorical interpretation, but that the unfolding of the Scriptures by way of deeper understanding we receive as something comparable to reading by syllables" (VI, 131). "He who is pure in heart, not on account of the commandments, but on account of his higher insight, he is a friend of God" (VII, 19). We must, however, close this part of our study, and we shall do so by choosing one of the most significant of his utterances of self-revelation: "But the statements of Belief, being commonplace [or superficial, ἐπιπόλαιοι], cannot furnish a scientific endurance of the Truth. But Greek philosophy, as it were, purges and habituates the soul in advance, toward the reception of Faith, upon which the Truth builds up higher insight" (VII, 21).

But we must now turn to Clement's attitude toward, and dealing with, the Gnostics. We saw how vigorously and consistently he withholds from them their own term of γνῶσις and γνωστικός throughout. Indeed, to him the elect are they "who are endowed with the desire of enquiry leading to higher insight" (τὸ ζητητικὸν

εἰς γνῶσιν). Even Job was a γνωστικός[1]. Thus he is compelled to allude or refer to the sects and cults of the Gnostics in other modes or terms. The term αἵρεσις or αἱρέσεις is much used, sects we call it, though αἵρεσις at first was not endowed with all the condemnation or bitterness which *heresy* now connotes. The term, in fact, was taken over from the sects or schools of the Greek philosophers; primarily the word meant choice. Often, too, Clement calls the Gnostics "the accusers." These polemical or controversial references of Clement are very abundant; they come in at any time, or in connection with, or suggested by, any theme or topic whatsoever, without any prelude at all as a rule. Evidently these Gnostic critics of Christian belief, claiming a superior Christianity, were fairly ubiquitous, and their partial assumption of some elements of Christianity constituted a far greater danger to the church than the persecutions of the Empire. It was indeed a living and a burning issue, involving, as Clement's procedure shows, a facing on the part of the church, in a great many directions.

I must be content here with naming a few of the larger outstanding features then more or less common to all or almost all of the Gnostics then flourishing, particularly those derived or descended from Marcion, from Valentinus, and from Basilides. They held that this world, our world, is evil; that its creator (or *demiurge*) is responsible for that immanent evil, which after all is inherent in matter and is propagated in the generation of our species. There are two Gods. The great and primeval God alone is good, but is distinct, in every way, from the Creator. And there is little doubt

[1] *Stromateis*, VII, 80.

but that they got their clue from certain tenets of Plato. Whenever we pass from the *Republic* of Plato (where the felicity and the perfection of the non-material and eternal world of forms or ideas are set forth)—whenever, I say, we pass on to Plato's effort to explain creation and the material world, an effort made in his *Timaeus*, then indeed we are brought face to face with that body of speculation out of which the Gnostics spun their dualism of the good and perfect God, and of the imperfect and inferior power, the Creator; the former being the Platonic ideal deity, and the latter the *demiurge* of the *Timaeus* and of the Old Testament. But I am sure I shall serve these studies best by presenting Clement's strictures as directly as may be, and with a minimum of comment on my part.

With a certain consistency the Gnostics either depreciated the Old Testament, or rejected it outright, and with it the Law as a system of divine injunction or moral obligation. There were even some who made the Creator the physical sire or progenitor of mankind, or suggested a plurality of such "creators." "Some others say that man was formed by different powers, and that the parts down to the navel are of a more divine craftsmanship, but those below, of the inferior" (*Stromateis*, III, 12). Elsewhere, indeed[1], Clement claims that certain tenets of Plato's *Phaedo* are more lofty than those of Marcion. "The Marcionites are ungrateful to the Creator" (III, 22). Out of this dogma came the sect of the Encratites and the rejection of matrimony. For this abstinence (ἐγκράτεια) the Gnostics made responsible, "if we must call this abstinence, the Creator himself, against whom thinking to make a stand, this modern

[1] *Op. cit.* III, 19.

Titan is a celibate unwillingly, running down [κατατρέχων] creation and creature" (III, 25). Quite the opposite to these Encratites were the Nicolaites of the Apocalypse and the Carpocratians, who permitted the "spiritual" proficient to "abuse the flesh" and so to gratify every lust, and taught that "every kind of living is permitted to the elect" (III, 41). Consistently with their hostility toward the Old Testament, some of the Gnostics claimed that Christ was the Son, not of the Creator, but of "the good God" (III, 68). In *Stromateis*, IV, 2, Clement sets forth that Law and Gospel proclaim *one* God only, "the almighty Lord," and endeavours to show this "to all the sects[1]."

Let us now turn to the affected superiority of the Gnostics, in which they looked down upon the orthodox Christians as upon men of mere belief, and as essentially inferior to themselves. The Valentinians, in Clement's day "allotted faith to us, the simple ones, but for themselves, *who by their nature are saved* in accordance with the advantage of the *distinctive seed*, they claim that there dwells in them the *gnosis* which is widely separated from faith" (II, 10). Also they claimed that faith, or belief (πίστις), was a product of fear[2], and fear was an irrational avoidance of an emotion (πάθος, II, 32). They took much offence at St Paul (Rom. iii, 20): "For by the law is the knowledge of sin" (II, 34), for the Law, as the work of the dethroned *demiurge*, had no place or authority in their system, and any harmony or compromise with the general Christian church and its canons was herein quite impossible. Clement also charges against the Gnostics, that in their reading-out of Scripture (obviously in

[1] Cf. IV, 170. [2] *Op. cit.* II, 30.

their services), they change accents to get a sense in conformity with their own pleasure, and so, too, they manipulated the texts of Scripture with deliberate design[1]. Earlier Gnostics (perhaps Cerinthus) are meant by 1 John ii, 18–19: "Even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us but they were not of us," etc. (III, 35).

Some of the Gnostics of Clement's time claimed that they had already received resurrection, on which account they condemned wedlock, because our Lord had said that in the life to come there would be no marrying or giving in marriage[2]. Also he charges the Gnostics with avoiding martyrdom. They said "true *witness-ship* [μαρτυρία] is the insight into the real God" —a device of cowardice, Clement said. Here is a striking example of their manipulation of Scripture. In the Sermon on the Mount our Lord said (Matt. v, 10): "Blessed are they which are persecuted *for righteousness' sake*, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης). The Gnostics changed the wording to ὑπὸ τῆς δικαιοσύνης— "Blessed are they who are persecuted *by justice*, for they shall be perfect" (ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἔσονται τέλειοι). Basilides, the Gnostic leader, was even a more thoroughgoing Platonist (than Clement himself) in suggesting that the soul, for its former sinning in another life, was enduring its castigation here, in the present life, the elect through martyrdom, with honour, and the others in being purged through their own punishment. Basilides also said that Jesus at bottom was a sinful

[1] *Op. cit.* III, 39.
[2] *Op. cit.* III, 48, 87.

man like the rest of mankind[1]. Prodikos, the leader of still another Gnostic sect, rejects prayer (VII, 41), whereas Clement designates the Christian thinker as him who alone is pious and godfearing, who is indeed endowed with deeper insight "in conformity with the standard of the church" (*κατὰ τὸν ἐκκλησιαστικὸν κανόνα*, *ibid.*).

Now it seems that to the Jews and the Greeks the Gnostic sects appeared as genuine parts of Christendom. The great number of these divisions and the contentions bred thereby were indeed alleged by Hebrews and Gentiles as a hindrance to their acceptance of Christ. Clement calls the Gnostics the tares among the wheat, and adverts to the different sects in the record of Greek philosophy—not a very felicitous parallel, I think. Again we meet that conservative note in the presbyter: "Even if others transgress *the agreements*, still it behoves us in no wise to transgress the standard set by the church....And especially do we guard the agreement concerning the greatest things [articles of faith], but they transgress it." "They" are the Gnostics obviously. Even among physicians, Clement argues, are there sects; must one therefore forswear all medical treatment? And the Christians, by test of both doctrine and conduct as well, must be like the coin that rings true[2].

We see, then, in concluding this study, that, whatever speculative syncretism was in the propaedeutic of Clement, where the issue was the positive self-definition, the doctrinal self-determination of the church as over against the innumerable forms of dissent, and the evaporation of the Gospel into the nebulous shapes

[1] *Op. cit.* IV, 16, 41, 83, 85. [2] *Op. cit.* VII, 89, 90.

and glittering soap bubbles of Gnosticism, *there Clement had to take his stand with the church.* We close with some words of Clement's own: "But there being a process of demonstration, it is necessary to join in descending to the enquiries, and *through the Scriptures themselves* to learn in a manner of cogent proof [ἀποδεικτικῶς] how the sects have failed, and how, in truth alone and *in the ancient church* [there is] both the most accurate insight and really the best sect."

CHAPTER V

TERTULLIAN OF CARTHAGE

THE fiery, and in many ways incomparable, and in no wise easily definable, presbyter of Carthage was a close contemporary of Clement of Alexandria. The works of neither contain any recognition of supremacy of the episcopal see of Rome and its holder, though the desire and policy of that functionary to assume a centralizing and imperial power, resembling that of the secular emperors, are noticeable in a single passage of Tertullian referring to churches in Asia and Phrygia[1].

Like Clement, Tertullian flourished under Septimius Severus and Caracalla (193–217 A.D.). We must not, in this study, dwell on the last or Montanistic stage of Tertullian. The Montanists were a schism rather than a sect, more rigorously Christian in certain ways than the church itself, more insistent on the sternest standards of Biblical conduct, claiming also that the Paraclete was still coming and to come and that special endowments of grace (*charismata*)[2] were still to be vouchsafed within the church. It was, I say, a schism, aiming indeed to realize that communion of saints named in the creed; actually, however, the Montanists bore in themselves the germs of a trend toward a narrow and ever narrowing theocratic conventicle.

In a large way Tertullian impresses us as that leader who made of the *ecclesia militans* a joyous and vigorous reality, challenging the pagan world surging about and

[1] *Adversus Praxean*, c. 1.

[2] *De Anima*, 9.

persecuting it, confronting also the Gnostic heresies dazzling or corroding within, and incidentally defending the canon of both Testaments; doing all this with a rapturous and glowing eloquence and energy which made him, in my estimation, a much more positive and incisive herald of the Christian faith than Clement of Alexandria portrayed in the preceding chapter. The entire personality of Tertullian and the superb positiveness of his Christian asseveration are in no wise tinctured, hampered or diluted by that same *saecularis sapientia* as is ever the case with the Presbyter of Alexandria, who, while striving to harmonize Platonism and Christianity, still remained within the pale of the church, while the pleader and lawyer of Carthage in the end crossed the threshold of an organization which was fast assuming the aspect of an hierarchy, a spiritual autocracy.

A *rhetor* and *patronus* perhaps unto middle life, Tertullian had gained the familiarity with classic letters long established and prescribed for those professions. But the profound spiritual meaning of his Christian conversion, together with the analysis by him of the philosophical theosophy of Gnosticism, must needs have endowed his philosophical reading with a degree of keen interest far exceeding that of mere erudition or sciolism. This side of his culture is most widely revealed in his treatise, On the Soul (*De Anima*), where he surveys in order the tenets of the chief schools, from Thales to Chrysippus. Even medical writers like Soranus or the great anatomists of Alexandria are cited[1]. One cannot help perceiving, however, that the renewed interest in Platonism (then and for several centuries

[1] *De Anima*, c. 6.

onward) gave to that speculation a certain quasi-dogmatic pre-eminence. But, unlike Clement, Tertullian is not impressed by it at all. In this same treatise, then, he goes on to sense perception, which he claims as genuine and real for the Saviour, rejecting the docetism of Marcion as well as the incidental critique of Gospel facts, a higher criticism which even then, before Strauss and Renan, had arisen: "But not even in the case of the Apostles did its nature deceive them: faithful were both their sight and hearing on the mountain [Matt. xvii, 3 sqq.], faithful also the taste of that wine, although it was water before [John ii, 9], faithful also the touch of Thomas [John xx, 28] who thenceforward was a believer. Read the witness-ship of John [1 John i, 1]: 'which we have seen,' says he, 'which we have heard, have seen with our own eyes, which our own hands have handled, of the Word of Life.'"

Tertullian has, we see, taken his stand definitely with the Gospel of Galilee, and his soul is emancipated from the thraldom of the great names in Greek speculation[1]. Paul's monition (Col. ii, 8) has become a principle of his inner life. "The learning of God blundered, I ween, in taking its rise in Judaea rather than in Greece. Christ, too, made a mistake in sending out fishermen for preaching rather than learned rhetoricians" (*De Anima*, 3).

The Judgment, to his keen and straightforward mind, was an essential and indispensable function and act in

[1] "Alii immortalem negant animum, alii plus quam immortalem affirmant, alii de substantia, alii de forma, alii de unaquaque dispositione disceptant; hi statum eius aliunde ducunt, hi exitum aliorsum abducunt, prout aut Platonis honor aut Zenonis vigor aut Aristotelis tenor aut Epicuri stupor aut Heracliti maeror aut Empedoclis furor persuaserunt" (*De Anima*, 3).

the very conception of the Godhead: "There are those, who, although they do not deny God, do not think that He absolutely is the examiner and umpire and judge, in which matter at all events they scorn us most of all, who have hastened to that doctrine [the Christian] through fear of the judgment announced as to come" (*De Testimonio Animae*, 2). He, too, was once a pagan:

> He, who, when that period of time is spent, is going to judge his worshippers so as to give them the requital of eternal life, the wicked to destine to fire equally eternal and continual, resurrecting all who died from the beginning, and remoulding them and reviewing them with a view to the judgment of both deserts. *These things we too once upon a time laughed at. We belonged to you. Christians are developed* [*fiunt*]*; they are not Christians by birth* (*Apologeticus*, 18).

Long before the *Dies irae, dies illa* of medieval times began to ring out its majestic peal to the Christian consciousness, the glowing pen of Tertullian elaborated that theme in his own way and for his own world, the pagan world. Not before a Rhadamanthys was it to be when tragedians and other stage folk, where charioteers and athletes, were to appear on a stage new to them.

> Here, I say, is He, the son of a carpenter or of a loose woman[1], destroyer of the Sabbath, a Samaritan and possessed of the devil. Here is He, whom ye bought of Judas, beaten with the reed and fists, befouled with spittle, given gall and vinegar to drink. Here is He, whom even His disciples filched away on the sly so that He might be said to have arisen, or the gardener carried Him away, lest his beds of lettuce might suffer from the great number of visitors. That you may gaze upon such scenes, that you may rejoice in such things, who, a praetor or consul or quaestor or priest, will furnish you the opportunity from his own bounty?... But of what kind are those scenes which eye

[1] *Quaestuariae*. Tertullian here scornfully alludes to the taunts currently made, especially by the Jews, against the maternity and paternity of the Saviour; cf. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 1, 28.

has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have they mounted into the heart of man? More pleasing, I ween, than the races and both theatres and all the stadium" (*De Spectaculis*, 30).

Was the pagan view and vision of their Christian fellow citizens more truthful and so, fairer, under Septimius Severus and Caracalla than it had been under Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines? The Christians simply could not, through their manifold dissent, live in conformity, and so in harmony, with the *nationes*, or *ethnici* (collectively), of the Empire. "Against these things then we are employed: Against the institutions of ancestors, against the prestige of established things, against the statutes of those who are our masters, against the argumentations of experts, against antiquity, custom, necessity, against precedents, *prodigia*, miracles" (*Ad Nationes*, II, 1).

The indirect condemnation of the current shows was resented by the pagan world. "There are those who think that the Christians, a class prepared for death, are educated toward this stubbornness by their abandonment of pleasures, that they more easily may despise life, having lopped off the bonds of connection therewith, lest they may yearn for that which they have now rendered superfluous for themselves" (*De Spectaculis*, 1). The term "brothers" current among the Christians was still given a sinister interpretation by the pagans[1]. The domestics in Christian households were stirred up to make charges against the same[2]. "If the Tiber floods the city, if the Nile fails to inundate the fields..., if there is an earthquake, if a famine, if a plague, at once the cry is: 'To the lions with the Christians[3]!'" "You

[1] "Infamant" (*Apologeticus*, 39).

[2] "Omnes a nullis magis prodimur" (*Ad Nationes*, I, 7).

[3] *Apologeticus*, 40; *Ad Nationes*, I, 9.

groan at the daily growing number of the Christians. You cry out that the community is hemmed in, that the Christians exist in the open country, in fortified places, in the islands. You are grieving, that every sex, every age, every rank in fine is coming over to us away from you" (*Ad Nationes*, I, 1).

Elsewhere[1] the Presbyter recounts the current modes of execution applied to the Christians: Cross and pale, the lacerating of their flanks with metal instruments, beheading, wild beasts, burning at the stake, while minor penalties were work in the mines or relegation to islands. One of the stated questions put by the proconsul then to the Christian martyrs in the brief trial preceding their condemnation seems to have been this[2]: "What master do you confess?" When, it would seem, the answer, "Christ," instead of the reigning emperor, was at once rated as an admission of treason or disloyalty. The confession of the Name was made to suffice, as a rule of procedure. The charges associated with the Name, infanticide, incestuous debauchery in nocturnal meetings, were not really investigated nor proven; the mere tenacious tradition of popular obloquy and hatred, maintained, perhaps from Nero's time onward, certainly from that of the Roman senators, pleaders, authors, and literary friends, Tacitus and the younger Pliny on[3], and summed up in Pliny's phrase "*flagitia cohaerentia nomini*," was still in force. Tertullian, indeed[4], with the text of Pliny's report to Trajan before him, sharply censures the precedent set by that Emperor,

[1] *Apologeticus*, 12.

[2] "Quem dominum confiteretur interroganti praesidi" (*De Jeiuniis*, c. 12). Cf. also our Lord's own prediction (Matt. xxiv, 9): "And you will be hated by all the nations on account of my name."

[3] Cf. Tertullian (*Apologeticus*, 7).

[4] *Ibid.* 2.

which entirely dispensed with any genuine ascertainment of facts, a negative, nay, a very cruel measure, the crimes being simply implied with the Name.

Why this coherence? Why, Tertullian asks, why this hatred of the Founder of the Christian religion, while the public is indifferent as to the founders of the Platonic, the Epicurean or Pythagorean schools, indifferent as to the medical authority of Erasistratus or the scholarly of Aristarchus? In the following citation of the current depreciation of Christ Himself, Tertullian may have had Celsus in mind: "They will say. . . a man of common condition, a sorcerer, filched after death from the tomb by his disciples" (*Apologeticus*, 23). But "We say it, and we say it openly, and torn and blood-stained from your torture we cry out aloud: It is God whom we worship through Christ. Deem Him a mere man [if you will], it is through Him and in Him that God wishes to be known and worshipped." The pagans, in every province, considered the Christians as chiefly *stubborn*, because a slight ritual act of occasional or periodic conformity with official usage appeared to the pagan citizens a mere passing trifle, as it was indeed for themselves, without the slightest spiritual significance, but the holding aloof of the Christian citizens was indeed what Tertullian calls it, *obstinatio fidei*[1].

At this time the worship of deceased emperors, emperor cult, had come to depress the cult of ancient and local gods into a decidedly inferior grade, both of estimation and observance, and this universal civic religion was the one palpable and obligatory form. For the *genius* of living emperors it was kept on the birthday or anniversary of accession. Thus, then, the pagan

[1] *Ibid.* 27.

provincials called on their Christian fellow-subjects to "sacrifice for the welfare of the Emperor[1]," and, to use Tertullian's expression, "there lies upon you the necessity of constraining us, as much as there lies on us the obligation of facing the crisis." And he further asserts quite definitely that now the Emperor was honoured much more than the gods of tradition, which were at bottom creatures of the state and must in the nature of things be feebler than the body which created them.

Thus runs the dialectic of the former pleader, in whom keen logic is often found blended with brilliant rhetoric and dazzling epigram. The Christians, he claims, are more truly loyal, because they invoke not state-created somethings but

> the eternal God, the true God, the living God, whose grace even emperors prefer to that of the others.... We are always praying for all emperors, a long life for them, a secure government, a safe dynasty, brave armies, a faithful senate, a quiet world,...who offer up for him a rich and a greater sacrifice than he himself commanded, viz. a prayer issuing from a chaste heart, from a soul free from guile, from a spirit of holiness, not grains of incense worth an *as*, the exudations of a tree in Araby, nor two drops of wine, nor the blood of a rejected ox which chooses to die....Thus then let [metal] claws dig into us as we are spread out to God, let crosses suspend us, fires lick us, swords cut our throats, beasts leap on us (*Apologeticus*, 30).

He defies the provincial governors[2] to institute persecutions of Christians in order to gratify the populace and so to enhance their own popularity. "We are rendered more numerous as often as your sickle harvests our lives; *the blood of the Christians is the seed grain* [of a new crop][3]."

[1] Cf. Tertullian (*Apologeticus*, 28). [2] *Ibid.* 50.

[3] This, for the general reader, has proved to be the most familiar, if not the most famous, utterance of Tertullian: "Semen est sanguis Christianorum" (*Ibid.* 50).

In a memorial of his later life addressed to the proconsul Scapula, he demands freedom of worship as a fundamental right: "One's religion is neither a hindrance nor an advantage to another," and he refers to the Christians of that province as follows: "Since so great a multitude of men, almost a majority in each town, we live in silence and self-control, perhaps better known as individuals than collectively, and not readily identified from any other source than from the reform of former delinquencies." "Pilgrims and strangers" —all souls with any spiritual aspirations are so or become so in this poor and evanescent world of sense and seeming, not the Christian soul alone, but in the world of that time the sincere Christians were very much more than now a people apart.

Most of the Roman games were originally established in connection with the service of some Roman or imported god (as the *Megalenses* for the Phrygian Great Mother), and in celebration were often introduced by acts of elaborate religious ritual, and from the Tiber these things spread to the provinces. As to the origin of pagan mythology and worship, Tertullian seems to have been greatly taken with the theory of Euhemerus[1], that historical personages after their death were so canonized; idolatry to his vision was a sort of ancestor worship, *parentatio*[2]. As for the theatres:

> We keep aloof from the theatre, which is the private meeting place of unchastity, where nothing is approved except that which is not approved elsewhere. Thus its chief attraction is mostly gotten up by filth, which an Atellan pantomime, which even an actor of burlesque represents through female rôles, destroying

[1] "Cum ipsos deos nationum homines retro fuisse etiam apud suos constet" (*De Idololatria*, 15).

[2] *De Spectaculis*, 12.

the sex of chastity, so that they may blush more easily at home than on the stage....Nor is there any place for Christians in the amphitheatre, where gladiators slay each other for the entertainment of the public, and where blood-curdling scenes are enacted when wild beasts rend their victims (*De Spectaculis*, 19).

There were even then moral latitudinarians, who claimed that such spectacles were not specifically forbidden in the Scriptures; the sun, nay, God Himself, beheld impurity without being stained thereby[1]. "But how can the human defendant compare himself with the divine Judge?"

As for God, setting aside philosophical systems of creation or cosmology, whether of the Platonic or the Epicurean type, Tertullian held that God certainly must be conceived as being without beginning and end and thus distinct from all matter[2]. And immutable the Godhead must be and not liable to corruption, decline or decay, blissful and not liable to any suffering, nor to be identified with sun, moon or stars.

Or when they use gold, bronze, silver, ivory, wood,...for the fashioning of idols, who placed these materials in the world but God, the Creator of the world? Man himself, the doer of all shameful deeds, is not only a work of God, but an image; and still, in body and spirit he has revolted from [*descivit*] his Creator. For we have not gotten our eyes for carnal desires, nor our tongue for evil report, nor our ears to be receptacles of evil report, nor our palate for the charges of the palate,...our hands for deeds of violence, our gait for a roving life. Or is the spirit immanent in the body that it may become the means of devising plots and deceptions and acts of unfairness? I ween not.

And he goes on to accept the Biblical record and doctrine of the Fall without subterfuge, palliation or compromise[3]. In our late generation, when the name

[1] *De Spectaculis*, 20. [2] *Ad Nationes*, II, 3.
[3] *De Spectaculis*, 2.

of Christian, somewhat loosely and laxly, is held by unnumbered myriads indeed, but often without any moral or spiritual integrity in the holding thereof, while, on the other hand, the positive dignity of the term *Christian* has an axiomatic ring the world over, it is indeed supremely difficult for us to realize within ourselves the tremendous earnestness and the consuming loyalty of the men and women in Tertullian's time who wore that name, Christian, surrounded and hated as they were, for that name's sake, by an unchristian world. There are Christians to-day, I believe, both in pulpit and pew, who have so far conformed to the materialism of this generation and its ancillary pseudophilosophy, as to banish eschatology, the doctrine of His consummation, from the slender total of their diluted creed, a creed secularized and reducing the transcendental yearnings of the soul to a set of rules for social betterment. It was not so with the Christians of the reigns of Septimius Severus and of Caracalla, from Mesopotamia to the pillars of Hercules, when the Judgment to come was a beacon to live by and a mighty consolation for dying. (Cf. Matt. xvi, 25–27.)

As for the person of Christ[1], Christianity, while a comparatively modern religion, might, he says, be taken as deriving some advantage in *status* from its relationship to Judaism, a *religio licita*. But apart from many differences in ritual and holidays and food and circumcision, there is, above all, a different name, derived from Him whom the Jews hold a mere man, and they deem the Christians worshippers of a mere human being. "But we neither blush as to Christ, since it is our gratification to be rated under His name, and under

[1] *Apologeticus*, 21.

it to be found guilty.... We must therefore make a few statements about Christ as a divine being."

Tertullian then goes on to review the history of Israel, its earlier spiritual privileges and eminence, the catastrophe (under Vespasian and Titus) and the latter condition of that race, roaming over the face of the earth, but banished from its own and ancient land. But the Christian confession drew far away from the narrow ethnic cohesion of Israel, striving as it did for universality, appealing to every race, state, and people, to the whole world, in fact. The dispenser and teacher of this doctrine of world-wide grace was He who was announced Son of God.

Next, Tertullian takes up Christ as the Logos, glancing also at the Stoic conception of that term. Now as to Christ, through whom God made all things (as in St John's Gospel), He issued from God, begotten through issuing from the essence of God,

> and therefore called Son of God, and God, from the unity of substance[1], as the ray issues from the sun, a part from the whole, but the sun will be in the beam because it is a sunbeam; nor is the substance (or essence) detached, but extended. So it is Spirit from Spirit[1] and God from God, as light kindled from light,... and what has issued from God is God and Son of God, and both are one.

He then proceeds to the virgin birth and incarnation, where God and man were blended. (*Nascitur homo deus mistus.*) The first advent, it is true, was in humility. But even then His other nature was abundantly revealed, in that He drove out unclean spirits, gave sight to the blind, cleansed lepers, re-endowed paralytics with control of their limbs, restored the dead to life by a word, made the very elements His servants, curb-

[1] As later expressed in the Nicene Creed.

ing storms and walking on the waters, showing that He was the Logos of God, the Word of the beginning. The entire Gospel story is tersely presented, apart from one antiquarian slip when he calls Pilate procurator of Syria. Then the crucifixion, armed guard at tomb, resurrection, the forty days, ascension, disciples spread over the world, persecution of Nero[1].

It is this faith (in the resurrection) which furnishes firmness in the persecution of latter years; it is that hope which disdains death[2].

Laugh ye, therefore, as much as ye please at the supremely stupid minds which die in order that they may live.... Is not this prospect of absolute identity even in bodily resurrection more equitable than the metempsychosis of the Pythagorean school? And with you pagans it is not merely myth-tellers and poets who speak of a judgment to come out of retribution, but philosophers also[3].

Now all these treatises so far presented are comparatively brief. The most bulky of his extant works is his polemic against Marcion, the eminent Gnostic. The specious and insidious "higher knowledge" had now reached the western part of the Empire, spreading in the valley of the Rhone (as we see from Irenaeus), no less than on the shores of western North Africa. While our author then, in 207 A.D., seems to have passed into his latter stage of Montanism, his work is still, of that time, the most notable defence of Biblical faith and its records against the speculative theosophy of the Gnostic cult. Marcion of Pontus began his work under Antoninus Pius, about 144 A.D.[4] Clearly the work

[1] *Ad Nationes*, I, 7. [2] *Ibid.* I, 19.
[3] Plato, *Republic*, X; *Gorgias*, 523 sqq.
[4] Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, I, 25; Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, I, 19.

of Marcion still had a great vogue. It cannot be our design here to coordinate the dogmas of Marcion from the pages of Tertullian, a task often accomplished both before and after Neander, not to speak of Irenaeus and Hippolytus.

It is the two Gods of Marcion, which challenge both the dialectic of Tertullian not less than his deep and consistent loyalty to Scripture as the records of revelation. For Marcion, the Creator is not *good* in the highest sense; He is indeed the God of the Jews but not of the Gnostics; it is not He whom Christ revealed. Evil was due to matter. There is, corresponding to our visible world, an invisible one (Plato's world of ideas), under the exclusive control of the non-Jewish higher God, who was revealed in Christ in the 15th year of Tiberius (29 A.D.), a Christ, however, Tertullian claims, whose annals began only with Marcion, his prophet, under Antoninus Pius. Marcion's introductory work, his Antitheses, had this design, to point out that Law and Gospel were irreconcilable, and consequently their respective authors or originators were likewise different and distinct; no prophecy therefore of our Christ. Marcion strove to buttress his thesis by citing the differences between Paul and Peter (Gal. ii, 11), which, however, as Tertullian properly insists, bore only on ceremonial, food, ritual of Judaism, not on any essentials of Christian faith; there was for them all and in all their preaching but one Gospel (Gal. i, 7; ii, 4).

Tertullian urges also, as a practical argument, the consistent and harmonius tradition of faith and doctrine, from the apostolic founders of the concrete churches onward, transmitted and maintained down to Tertullian's time; every one of those churches "con-

fessed Christ in the Creator[1]." Marcion's God in fact is Plato's idea of the Good, and Marcion utterly rejected the doctrine of the Fall and of the origin of sin; unthinkable, he claimed, that on account of so trifling a delinquency as that in Paradise, sin should permanently and essentially have vitiated man's nature. Marcion also denied the resurrection of the body, and taught docetism, viz., that Christ during His sojourn in Palestine had but a phantasmal body. Marcion also censured in the Jewish Creator anger and other emotions (the Stoic postulate of ἀπάθεια).

But what a god is that one, says Tertullian, who does not punish sin, who does not concern himself with good and evil, a do-nothing and care-nothing deity, who judges not, who is defied and disobeyed with impunity? The fear and awe of the Eternal Judge was indeed one of the strongest forces in Tertullian's soul, through which he separated himself from the world and its specious pleasures[2]. But much more severe was the test of persecution and the occasion thereof, the emergency when the box with incense was presented to the suspected ones (*acerram offerre*), when all those who took even a mere grain from it and threw it upon the altar kindled before an image of the Emperor thus confessed themselves non-Christian and by so slight an act (as the pagans rated it) gained their lives[3]. "Nay, nay," you (the Marcionites) say, "we would not deny Christ thus." You yourselves then *fear* this sin,

[1] "Nullam autem apostolici census ecclesiam invenias, quae non in creatore christianizet" (*Adversus Marcionem*, I, 21).

[2] *Ibid.* I, 27.

[3] Cf. Pliny, *Epp.* X, 96: "Cum praeeunte me deos appellarent et *imagini tuae* quam propter hoc iusseram cum simulacris numinum adferri, *ture* ac vino supplicarent."

and in so doing you certainly fear Him who forbids sin.

Further on Tertullian argues that God did not make perpetual sinlessness compulsory for Adam, and it was no denial of God's goodness that this was so[1]. "God alone is good in His essential being" ("Bonus natura deus solus," II, 6). As for man, "neither the reward for good nor evil could be justly allotted to him who had been proven either good or evil by necessity, not by volition." God had created man "not for living merely, but for right living" (II, 8). Tertullian bases his theology here on Genesis ii, 7, *living* being a divine gift, *right living* a divine injunction. "Freedom of decision [*libertas arbitrii*, the αὐτεξούσιον of Clement of Alexandria] must [not] throw its own fall upon him by whom it was not administered as it ought to have been" (II, 9). Whatever our spiritual or academic pride may find to like or dislike in this tremendous domain of Creator, creature, sin, evil, responsibility, life, and death, we will grant to Tertullian and to Pascal[2], that the creature, now and actually, is essentially and abysmally inferior to Him in whom is neither sin nor limitation of time or power, or measure of goodness.

As for evil, the Marcionites did not hesitate to make the *demiurge*, or God of the Jews, directly responsible for it[3], not merely for the evils of transgression and punishment. We see then that the Marcionites, like many critics of our own times, confronted Scripture and Scriptural doctrine with conceptions and postulates

[1] *Adversus Marcionem*, II, 5.

[2] Who, in his *Pensées*, touched upon this matter in his own lucid and forceful manner.

[3] *Adversus Marcionem*, II, 14.

which were intrinsically philosophical and speculative, but certainly also extrascriptural, a form of higher criticism which always has overawed, and probably always will overawe, those who have none or but a secular anchor in their own souls. Tertullian here greatly differs from Clement of Alexandria, whose striving to blend or buttress Christianity with Platonism and certain elements of Stoicism is so pronounced, especially in his *Stromateis*, as we saw in a former study. Tertullian, in fact, as a Christian believer, had cleanly emancipated himself from the authority of the various philosophical schools, and with keen perception he measured their influence upon the various Gnostic sects, which had been and were still greatly disturbing the Christian church through their partial or simulated adherence to some of her doctrines, "because they destroy the faith of some[1]." I subjoin a passage which in force and sweeping comprehensiveness is not equalled by anything preserved of his pen:

These are the doctrines of human beings and of live spirits which were born for itching ears [2 Tim. iv, 3] from the spirit of secular wisdom, which the Lord calling foolishness has chosen the foolish things [1 Cor. i, 27] of the world toward the confusion even of philosophy itself. For that is the theme of secular wisdom; it is a rash interpreter of the nature and disposition of God. The heresies themselves are equipped by philosophy. Hence the "eons" and "forms[2]," what d'you call 'em, and the three types of man in Valentinus; he had been a Platonist. Hence Marcion's God, better on account of his calmness[3]; he had come from the Stoics. And that the soul is said to perish is held by the Epicureans, and the restoration of the body is denied by the united voice of the teaching of all the philosophers;

[1] "Quia fidem quorundam subvertunt" (*De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, 1).

[2] The "ideas" of Plato.

[3] The ἀπάθεια of the Stoic system.

and where matter is equalized with God, that is the teaching of Zeno, and when something is propounded of a fiery God, Heraclitus pops up. The same themes are handled with the heretics and the philosophers; the same repeated treatments are involved: Whence evil, and why? and what latterly Valentinus set forth: Whence God? [Answer:] "From reflection and untimely birth." Poor Aristotle! who established dialectic for them, that craft resembling the chameleon, to build up or to pull down; in statements, forced; in computations, harsh; in arguments, the worker of contentions; troublesome even to itself; treating everything all over again, that it may never accomplish the treatment of anything at all.

After citing 1 Timothy i, 4; Titus iii, 9; and Colossians ii, 8, Tertullian goes on to say:

He [Paul] had been at Athens, and he knew through personal contact [*congressibus*] that human wisdom which affects truth and spoils it too, a wisdom which itself also was much divided into its own schools, through the variety of sects which fought one another.... Let them see to it, who have produced a Stoic and Platonic and dialectic Christianity (*De Praescriptione Haereticorum*, 7).

(The Gnostics, I believe, are meant; or Clement?)

Of course, Marcion, in his new Christian insight and Higher Criticism, found himself at variance not only with apostolic tradition but with almost every portion of the New Testament. Here I may cite Neander, of whom otherwise the present study has maintained complete independence: "But here also he [Marcion] presents to us a warning example, showing how such investigations, when guided and controlled by preconceived dogmatic opinions[1] in which the understanding has entangled itself, must necessarily lead to disastrous results—showing how easily an arbitrary hypercriticism may slide into the opposite extreme in opposing a care-

[1] Neander probably had in mind F. C. Baur and the Tuebingen School.

less facility of belief, and how readily, in combating one class of doctrinal prejudices one may fall into others differing only in kind[1]."

At this time the cleavage of Apostolic and Gnostic churches seemed to be quite palpable and fairly familiar to all Christians; one could institute a survey (*recensus*) of Apostolic and heretical churches[2]. There were then, everywhere, accessible records, as to how old they were, who founded them, who had presided over them in order from the beginning. Besides churches of their own, the Gnostics had specific regulations, *e.g.* as to baptism, probably each of the sects of cults something apart. Marcion himself, *e.g.*, seems to have admitted no one to baptism but virgins or unmarried men or widows or those who previously had divorced their spouse, and definitely discontinued the connubial relation of life[3].

As the Christology of the Apostolic Church (*e.g.* the suffering of our Lord, the atonement, etc.) was in the main offensive to the Pontic thinker, it is fairly obvious, that the Gospels of the Apostolic church were likewise offensive to him. As a matter of fact, he had composed or constructed a gospel, or gospel-narrative, of his own[4]. These early assaults upon the authenticity and veracity of our Gospels we might well examine with some care. Marcion operated thus: He inserted statements of fact due to his own devising[5]. This "gospel," as we saw, he buttressed by his controversial monograph, his *Anti-*

[1] Aug. Neander, *General History of the Christian Church*, transl. by Joseph Torrey, Boston, 1853, vol. I, p. 460.

[2] "Facillime hoc probatur apostolicarum et haereticarum ecclesiarum recensu" (*Adversus Marcionem*, III, 1).

[3] *Adversus Marcionem*, I, 29.

[4] *Ibid.* III, 17.

[5] *Interpolando*, IV, 1; *Adulteratum*, IV, 2.

theses, to prove that Law and Gospel were incompatible. Tertullian, in surveying the Gospels of the general church distinguished between Matthew and John on the one side[1] as being directly apostolic and presenting Christ as the corollary (*supplementum*) of Law and Prophets, whereas those of Mark and Luke were supported by the authority of their apostolic teachers and principals, Peter and Paul[2]. These were four definite names. But Marcion's gospel bore at its head no definite name but his own. On the other hand, Paul at Jerusalem (Gal. ii, 2), by actual conference with the witnessing apostles, sought to secure certainty as to the harmony of his own Gospel with theirs[3].

Now Marcion, herein a precursor of the Tuebingen school and other higher critics, grounded his Gospel-critique on Paul's rebuke of Peter (Gal. ii, 11) at Antioch, claiming therefrom that the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, and John were not authentic or reliable. He therefore proceeded to utilize the Paulinian Luke alone, rejecting, however, many parts of that writer also; Marcion "seems to have chosen Luke in order to slash him" ("Lucam videtur Marcion elegisse, quem caederet," IV, 2); Judaizers, to incorporate Law and Prophets, had interpolated Luke[4]. As such no doubt Marcion considered, *e.g.*, the narrative of the discourse on the way to Emmaus. Marcion, then, was the first critic—Christian self-claimed, in the period from Tiberius to Antoninus Pius, who outrightly called in question the records of the Christian church, having, as Tertullian says with characteristic irony, "been so long looked forward to by Christ, who now felt remorse

[1] *Adversus Marcionem*, IV, 2.
[2] Cf. Eusebius, II, 15; V, 8.
[3] *Adversus Marcionem*, IV, 2.
[4] *Ibid.* IV. 4.

at having been in a hurry to send out the apostles without the assistance of Marcion" (IV, 4).

Tertullian then goes on to a line of argumentation, which has greatly impressed the present writer, much of whose life has been spent in the pursuits of historical criticism and in the weighing of sources and tradition in the domain of ancient history. Tertullian says: "If it is a well established fact, that that is more true [*verius*] which is earlier, and that is earlier which also was from the beginning, and that this is from the beginning which is from the apostles, that which with the churches of the apostles was sacrosanct" (*sacrosanctum*, IV, 5). This, then, was something resembling that ancient and solemnly asserted privilege of inviolable immunity guaranteed both by the state and by the curses of religious awe, the strongest and most sweeping term I believe, which the former *patronus* and *rhetor* could find within the compass of Latin utterance[1], something or somebody hallowed (as the *Tribunus Plebis*, *e.g.*), an injury to whom caused the misdemeanant to forfeit his life. And Tertullian says elsewhere: "Traverse the Apostolic churches, in which up to the present time [*adhuc*] the chairs of the apostles [*i.e.* the physical utensils] are used for the purposes of presiding [*praesidentur*] in which [churches] the very authentic letters of the same are read out [in service, I think] causing to resound the voice, and representing the face of each of them" (*De Praescriptione Haereticorum*).

[1] Holmes' version (Antenicene Library, 1868), "kept as a sacred deposit," is inadequate. Westcott's (*On the Canon*, p. 384) "inviolate" is closer; cf. Festus, s.v. "*Sacrosanctum* dicitur, quod iure iurando interposito est institutum, si quis id violasset, ut morte poenas penderet. Cuius generis sunt tribuni plebis aedilesque eiusdem ordinis."

This, then, is the gist of Tertullian's claim: The churches established by the apostles received the Gospels in the lifetime of the apostles. The churches were infinitely scrupulous, nay jealous, to admit neither person nor document, unless absolutely certified as to their mandate or authenticity. These matters could be traced backward by what Tertullian calls the *census* (*i.e.* the official records and documents) of the churches. Now then, I say, would it not have been impossible to introduce and permanently establish a document forged under the name of an apostle in the latter's lifetime and service, without the consequence of prompt discovery and rejection? And, further, would it not have been even more impossible and wholly vain to attempt introducing a forged epistle or gospel to churches and disciples after the death of the author? Marcion, *e.g.*, rejected the Apocalypse; still all the "supervisors" (or bishops) installed by St John and those succeeding the first ones accepted that book of the New Testament[1]. It is then an assumption of boldest assurance, a conjecture beyond the wildest fancy, to assert that the churches, viz. the seven churches in the Roman province of "Asia," particularly the church in the provincial capital, Ephesus, a church doubly dear and familiar to John the reputed author, and further especially that of Smyrna[2]—unthinkable, we claim with Tertullian, that these churches (*Joannis alumnas ecclesias*) one and all, should have been imposed upon, either during the lifetime of that long-lived disciple and apostle, or after his death.

[1] *Adversus Marcionem*, IV, 5.

[2] "Polycarpus, Johannis apostoli discipulus et ab eo Smyrnae episcopus ordinatus, totius Asiae episcopus princeps fuit, quippe qui nonnullos Apostolorum et eorum qui Dominum viderant, magistros habuerit et viderit" (Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus*).

The succession of bishops, as recorded in Clement's or Tertullian's time, was in no wise more definite, ascertainable, and truly transmitted from the beginning, than was the genuineness of the documents which confirmed and guaranteed the original missionary labours and the acts of ordaining the supervisors or "bishops." For Luke, therefore, Tertullian claims a condition of integrity, a character of not having been tampered with, from Paul's time to his own day. Matthew, Mark, and John obviously were certified by the same voucher.

We must be content with but a small number of the exegetical and critical sallies of Marcion; in the end I trust we will be brought to hold in even greater reverence perhaps than ever before that Testament which like its core and kernel, the Cross, "towers above the wrecks of time," or above the restless and ever resurgent tides of erudite and ambitious speculation. Marcion's Christ was not born of the Virgin Mary at Bethlehem, but in a sudden epiphany turned up at Capernaum in the 15th year of Tiberius; so Marcion would seem to have eliminated everything in Luke which preceded. When our Lord spoke of mother and brethren (Luke viii, 21), he thereby, according to Marcion, avowed a denial of his own nativity not merely of Mary, but he denied any birth at all.

We marvel at the leadership of one, who operated with such almost childish crudeness and violence of pretended exegetical procedure. In our authentic Luke (x, 25) the question put to Christ by an expert in the Law (*νομικός*) is this: "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (*ζωὴν αἰώνιον*). Marcion struck out the adjective eternal. Why? The Jewish scholar, according to Marcion's pet doctrine, merely meant long

physical life, which alone the *demiurge*, the Creator-God of the Jews, could bestow. Again, when (Luke xi, 1) one of the disciples asked our Lord to teach them how to pray, "as John also taught his disciples," Marcion expounded this as follows: The God of Christ was different from that of John, and the disciples of each recognized different Gods[1]. The title of Ephesians Marcion changed to Laodiceans. In Romans he removed "what he wanted." In a word, Marcion's higher criticism was dominated by his one fundamental design, to present Christ as an enemy to the Law and as having no relation whatever to the Prophecy of the Old Testament.

But we must conclude this matter as well as the present chapter with a critical *tour de force* of the speculative reformer of the Gospel, in Ephesians iii, 9: "And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world *hath been hid in God who created all things*" (*τοῦ μυστηρίου τοῦ ἀποκεκρυμμένου ἀπὸ αἰώνων ἐν τῷ θεῷ τῷ πάντα κτίσαντι*). Marcion simply struck out the preposition *in* so as to secure this sense: "The mystery," etc., "which from the beginning of the world had been hid *to* [we say *from*] the God who created all things." Clearly Marcion's criticism and exegesis were simply subservient and ancillary to his own speculative and metaphysical prepossessions. The *demiurge* of Plato's *Timaeus* (identified with the Creator of Genesis) must needs be distinct from and inferior to Plato's (and Marcion's) *Good God*, unconcerned with matter, the sovereign in that non-material and pre-material world, of which the beneficent "forms" or "ideas" were the emanations. But of these more in the next chapter.

[1] *Adversus Marcionem*, IV, 26.

CHAPTER VI

NEOPLATONISM AND CHRISTIANITY

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Many expositors of the history of the Christian church pay high tribute to this latter and last phase of classic speculation. They speak of its universal historical import (Steinhart); they make it a positive factor in the history of Christian theology (Harnack, Mitchell, *Encycl. Brit.* XI ed.); they cite Clement, Origen, Augustine, to prove their points. As if Christianity were merely or chiefly an academic process. It is true that Clement and Augustine did come out of an earlier manhood deeply swayed by philosophy and kindred concerns. To dovetail some theory of Christianity into the most spiritual of the Greek systems appeared tempting to Clement (as we saw in ch. IV), who was a Platonist before he became a Christian. Still, if all of Plotinus and Porphyry, nay of Plato himself, had been annihilated, would the faith once delivered to the saints have been affected or modified in the slightest degree? We know what it was at its inception; has that groundwork been modified by excrescences of speculation from within or accretions from without? Neoplatonism may be defined as an attempt to resuscitate Plato[1] and to turn his fond flights of metaphysical vision (as in the *Phaedrus*) into a kind of dogma, which in a certain spiritual dignity and loftiness could challenge or surpass Christianity itself, while, mind you, preserving traditional and popular polytheism with supple accommodation and a refining allegorical exegesis. Neoplatonism in fact carried water on both shoulders here, at once satisfying an esoteric élite, and likewise accommodating itself to the pagan multitude. It never permitted itself to be put into a position to confess or to deny anything in a way

[1] As by Plutarch, and later, about 160 A.D., by Apuleius of Madaura; we note the claim that Plato was a son of Apollo and of the Attic woman Perictione—"Talis igitur ac *de talibus* Plato non solum heroum virtutibus praestitit, verum etiam aequiparavit divum potestatibus" (*De Dogmate Platonis*, I, 2).

which might have caused it discomfort or conflicts with pagan society or pagan state. Christianity, on the other hand, was then, and is always, reared on a Gospel of mighty facts, centring on a Saviour in whom human and divine natures were curiously united, through whom salvation both from sin and eternal death is to be gained—a body of mighty consolation, though demanding that man recognize his essential sinfulness—attested, not by the consistency of metaphysical theses, but by His resurrection, and borne to all creatures by His witnessing disciples[1] in the face of hatred, obloquy, scorn, torture, and death itself, a doctrine appealing equally to the loftiest intellect as well as to every humble and contrite heart.

WE begin with the Platonist Celsus. The period of time when Origen composed his rejoinder, about 246 or 248 A.D., exhibits a vast accomplished diffusion of the fame of Jesus in that world, attested by Origen[2], a fame exceeding that of any one noted in secular history, and this in spite of the crucifixion. Why, if the cross was the end of all, why did not they "who had been deceived in advance" of the cross—why did not they leave His name and fame forever after the cross? We see at once that up to date destructive critics of these days are not much in advance of the earlier pagan philosophers who rejected the Gospel; such as this Celsus was.

This Platonist (perhaps an Egyptian Greek) seems to have published his polemic against Christianity in the last years of Marcus Aurelius (178–180 A.D.), when the danger from the Marcomanni on the upper Danube was uppermost among public concerns in the Empire. Long after the death of Celsus Origen (in 246 or 248) dedicated to his wealthy friend, the former Gnostic Ambrosius, his eight books "against Celsus," whose work clearly was still reputed the most notable attack

[1] Ἀντόπται, Luc. i, 2.

[2] *Contra Celsum*, I, 30.

on Christianity, made by a Greek scholar who had actually condescended to examine the Gospels a little. Evidently, then, the current popular ideas about the irksome religion were varied and often dissonant. Celsus chose as his titie *A True Account*[1]. I shall but rarely cite from Origen's rejoinders or analyses, which are indeed strong both on their Scriptural as well as on their dialectic side, and are, besides, sane, clear, patient, fair.

In the first two books the Platonist has a Jew make the attacks. The mother of Jesus was cast forth as an adultress before his birth; working as a day labourer in Egypt He learned their magic arts there. He was, however, a wretched juggler. His own disciples (plural) betrayed Him. That He foreknew and foretold His sufferings, was a fiction of His followers. He would have escaped had He known the future. Against a divine being Judas would not have plotted—Celsus had read our Lord's suffering in Gethsemane; Origen replies by insisting that this very thing attests the love of truth of the evangelists. The real Messiah, the Jew proceeds, was to prove a mighty world ruler. The Christians call the Son *Logos*, but He was a mere man, shamefully executed. Why did He not save Himself in the catastrophe of Golgotha? Why does He not now judge those who insult Him and His Father? Why should He be considered more divine than the magicians? Some Satan could contrive such things. Mary Magdalene a witness of the resurrection? A woman half frantic[2]. We notice, then, that Celsus had consulted also St John's Gospel[3]. Why was not the Risen One seen by *all* the world that had known Him before

[1] Ἀληθὴς Λόγος. [2] Πάροιστρος, II, 55. [3] John xx, 11.

His suffering and death? Why did He not vanish from the cross[1]?

But all this is merely a preliminary skirmish of the Platonist. To his vision both Christians and Jews are equally fools. The Christians, too, are breaking up into many sects[2], though united at first. Celsus proposes to match Jesus with Hercules, Aesculapius, Dionysos, as wonder-workers beneficent to mankind, and other supermen commended by the oracles of Greece. The worship extended to Hadrian's concubine Antinous is as sound as that rendered by Christians to Jesus. The Christians are able and eager to persuade the ignorant and common folk, slaves, women, and children, but not the thinking and cultured. Christians invite the sinners and the ignorant; how different from the initiations of the Greek mysteries! To think, that a divine being should have been sent for sinners, and not for the just! How odd, this preference for sinful men[3]! Must God send a Saviour physically? How can God leave His own abode? Why did He get this notion only after so long a time? Celsus compares both Christians and Jews to bats, ants, frogs, worms, in some corner of a morass squabbling and contending. Are the Christians really the aim and end of the universe?

Of Genesis, which Celsus outlines, he speaks with scorn[4]. The Platonist and reader of the *Timaeus* stands revealed: "God [*i.e.* the Good God of the Ideal World] created nothing mortal[5]. . . the Soul indeed is the work

[1] *Contra Celsum*, II, 11, 24, 35, 49, 63, 69.
[2] The time when the Gnostics flourished.
[3] Τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν προτίμησις, III, 64.
[4] *Contra Celsum*, III, 10, 22, 36, 44, 59, 62; IV, 3, 23.
[5] This is the thesis which caused the Gnostics to reject the Old Testament.

of God, but the body is of a different order" (IV, 52). Evil is not from God, but bound up with Matter; man is by no means the apex of creation. The books of the Jews and Christians are plain stuff and fit for common folk only[1]. Celsus believes in mantic lore and manticism. Why do the Jews not worship the constellations? Are not these the sources of all our material blessings, sun, moon, stars being deities subsidiary to the Supreme God? Why did the Christians forsake the ancestral institutions of the Jews? All religions, being ethnical and institutional, are equally right—for their lands. The Christian sects[2] bitterly calumniate each other. If you wish to learn of the primeval God, study the Seventh Epistle of Plato[3]. That sage did not claim any divine revelation or sonship of God. The foolish Christians say: "Believe! or be gone[4]!"

Next Celsus descants on the descent or incarnation of souls, of the initiation into the Ophites, Mithras-cult, and its symbolism, which he compares with Christianity. Throughout Celsus confounds Gnostics such as the Ophites with the orthodox Christians. Personally, Celsus confesses himself an agnostic on the problem of Creation. Evolution had been taught by Democritus and others. As for God (the Neoplatonic one) he has not even any substance[5], *is not attainable by reason nor nameable*[6]. Jesus really could not arise with His body. If God could send a spirit, why did He need incarnation through a woman's womb for His messenger?

[1] Ἰδιωτικά, IV, 87.
[2] Here really are meant the church and the Gnostics.
[3] Now held non-authentic.
[4] *Contra Celsum*, IV, 33–48, 74, 88–97; V, 12, 34, 63; VI, 8.
[5] Οὐσία, VI, 64.
[6] Οὐδὲ λόγῳ ἐφικτὸς οὐδὲ ὀνομαστός, VI, 65.

The omniscient God then did not know that He was sending His Son among evil and sinful men. How can Christians rely on prophecy and still despise the Greek oracles? They prate of Heaven and resurrection because they learned something of the Pythagorean doctrine of the soul's exchange of bodies which they misunderstood. The Christians really are a cowardly and body-loving race. You Christians reject as idols the other gods that are manifested, and Him who is more miserable than the real cult-figures themselves—a mere corpse—Him you revere, and seek a Father like unto Him (this perhaps, in Celsus, an echo of St John's Gospel vii, 36). He cites the *locus classicus*, Plato, *Timaeus* 28 c[1].

As to God, Celsus next cites Plato, *Republic*, 507–509. This is the revelation which you Christians should make your own. But if you are too stupid to do so, then at least hold your peace. Why not take Jonas or Daniel for a new Christ? For himself, Celsus rejects the divinity of the idols; but still the powers so represented are the *under-gods* holding their provinces from the supreme God[2], who is really revered through them. This worship does not grieve or annoy Him to whom they all belong. The Christians are no genuine monotheists at all, because "they excessively worship" (*ὑπερθρησκεύουσιν*) the mere servant and messenger of God, and call Him "Son of God." One must pray to the *daimones* that they may be benign. Whenever the Christians eat, drink or breathe, they are the beneficiaries of certain sublunar powers or *daimones*; therefore, either

[1] *Contra Celsum*, VI, 2

[2] Plato, *Timaeus*, 41 A[1], 24–39, 81; VII, 3, 32. Cf. the writer's *Testimonium Animae*, p. 236.

leave the earth altogether, or render first fruits and offer prayers to the *daimones*, to whom terrestrial things are allotted. When the professing Christian is outlawed from sea and land, is imprisoned and crucified, why does not your "Son of God" come to the aid of the sufferer? You scorn the cult figures; you would not dare to do so to Hercules or Bacchus in person. Those men who punished your God on Golgotha never suffered anything for it during the rest of their lives[1].

Celsus agrees with the belief in bliss and in retribution, but nothing bodily, the body being a penalty of the soul[2]. "If anyone bid you to bless the Sun or Athena with a fine paean, then you will seem the more to revere the great God, if you chant these too; for the reverence for God [τὸ θεοσεβές] *passing through all* becomes more perfect" (VIII, 66). We perceive how Platonism was used to buttress polytheism. "Be loyal to the emperor, mind you! If all would do what you do, he would be forlorn, and the world would become a prey to the barbarians" (VIII, 68)! "What has your God done for *the Jews*, who have no particle of soil of their own, nor altar—and as for *you*, you are skulking from persecution[3]." "If the present Roman emperor were to turn Christian and then be captured [by the barbarians] and the next, and then the next—then some government will arise, with sober sense and perceiving the drift of the times, which will destroy you Christians, root and branch [παγγενεί], all of you, before it perishes

[1] *Contra Celsum*, VII, 45, 53, 68; VIII, 2, 14, 24, 33.

[2] *Op. cit.* VIII, 53.

[3] VIII, 69. Clearly written about 177 A.D., when the persecution of Marcus Aurelius was raging, especially at Lyons. Eusebius, V, 1: Κατεψεύσαντο ἡμῶν Θυέστεια δεῖπνα καὶ Οἰδιποδείους μίξεις. Cf. Minucius Felix.

itself" (VIII, 71). The Christians, then, we see, were held by this cultured Platonist to be disloyal at heart towards the Empire and to the *princeps*; how much more intense must have been the feelings of the masses and of the mobs, in Lyons, or Smyrna, or Antioch, or Milan!

When I now take up Plotinus, I must limit myself in many ways. The data of his life prefixed to his works by his favourite disciple Porphyry (the Tyrian Malchus, so hellenized) have thence been transcribed into all the manuals of the history of philosophy. At 28, in Alexandria, he began to study philosophy with Ammonius "Saccas," a Platonist who had been a Christian. Eventually Plotinus came to Rome under Philippus Arabs in 244, being then forty years old. Later Gallienus and his Empress Salonina held him in high esteem. The gentle and unworldly man, in later life, planned even to establish in Campania a town to be called *Platonopolis*, and to reside there with his esoteric band. Nothing came of it. His great and constant aim, says his editor and disciple, was to assimilate, to unite himself, with the One who is never confounded with those things which issue from Him[1], that Being, which was not only beyond this phenomenal world, but also beyond all thought and conception, attainable but rarely, in a rapture of spiritual vision (ἔκστασις), an experience which came to this thinker *but four times in his life.*

But here we must concentrate our attention on that part of his doctrine which pertains to religion or dominates the soul like a religion. He died in 270 A.D., aged sixty-six. Harnack[2] has transcribed from Zeller

[1] III, 8, 9. [2] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, XI ed., s.v. Neoplatonism.

the summarizing phrase, "Dynamic Pantheism"; we gain nothing by such condensing terms. One cannot fairly foist upon Plotinus the doctrine that the One is the universe, because the world of material phenomena is ineffably inferior to the One, and Creation to the Neoplatonist, as it was to Plato himself, was a sore problem, and this, too, while the universe is conceived as intelligent and the "World-soul" was inherited from Plato and Pythagoras. Nothing can emanate from the Deity as such. All virtues are assimilations to the standards which prevail *there*. The word *here* is constantly used by him of this life on earth, in the body, as different from *there*, viz. the world of ideas from which the soul descended and to which it is to return. Plato's *Phaedrus* had a curious quasi-dogmatic palingenesis, as I suggested before[1]. The highest life of the soul is a kind of spiritual or metaphysical hermitage or withdrawal from this world, and so from men and action, in order to view the One (*θεωρεῖν τὸ Ἕν*), viz. Plato's Idea of the Good, from which issued the thinking mind, which alone is important in man, which constitutes the real personality of each one. In this God, then, there are no limiting or defining categories (such as we require for our operations of judgment); everything there is power, and at the same time reality. But Plotinus' god in his definition is baldly and discouragingly a negative and nebulous something, in an immensity of remoteness. When one reads much in Plotinus, one becomes almost instinctively habituated to the vague and indefinite It, not He.

[1] Augustine, *Contra Academicos*, III, 15, of Plotinus: "Qui Platonicus philosophus ita Platonis similis iudicatus est, ut in hoc ille *revixisse* putandus sit."

One turns almost in a kind of spiritual despair to that concrete and definite Revelation (compared with which Platonism and its offspring, Plotinism, are but unanswered aspirations of the soul) in St John xiv, 8: "Philip saith unto him: Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us," with the answer of Christ. The supreme One of Plotinus does not think; otherwise there would be a duality; *It* is no part, as already stated, of the whole. It eternally wills but itself, is formless, and still the measure of all things. This god is also a ubiquitous and still nowhere localized soul, whence the particular soul (ἡ μερική) came, and to which it returns. All things are dependent on god, thus he is the good of all. There was no creation in time, nor a gradual evolution from chaos. There is an all-pervasive sympathy (ὁμοπάθεια) throughout the material universe, by virtue of which the earth has light for its eyes, air for its smell, water for its taste, nay it hears, and (by virtue of that general sympathy of Nature) heeds even prayers[1].

Plotinus, we see, reserves a place for the people's polytheism. Many parts of Plotinus' conception of God are really noteworthy in their loftiness, and we see why this last and most transcendental of the Greek systems of metaphysics arrested Christian thinkers. I must transcribe one *locus classicus*. Speaking of the nature of the Good, he says: "It is this, to which all things are attached [ἀνήρτηται], and to which all existence [πάντα τὰ ὄντα] aspires, having it as a beginning [or principle, ἀρχήν] and needing it; and It is without wants, sufficient unto itself, needing nothing, measure and limit of all things, giving out of itself mind and

[1] *Enneades*, VI, 7, 24; V, 5, 3; 8, 7.

substance and soul and life, and, as concerns mind, activity" (*Enneades*, I, 8, 2. Cf. St Paul on the Areopagus).

It remains that we make some survey of his strictures of the Gnostics, who at the time[1], even by pagan philosophers, were pretty clearly distinguished from "the Christians." His treatise "against the Gnostics" is now found in *Enneades*, II, 9. He rebukes them for disparaging creation and the creator, though many evil or troublesome things were indeed in our own world. It was absurd to claim for our own souls immortality, and then to deny such to the sun and the starry heaven and the wonderful order and wisdom of its orbits. It was presumptuous for the Gnostics to claim for themselves a future abode of bliss (the *Pleroma*) after death. Some of their doctrines were from Plato, but their own innovations were outside of truth. What better universe than this was there? Why not consider the stars gods? He furtheron insisted on the difference between the cult-figures (the *agalmata*) and the gods themselves, who looked down from above and could easily escape blame at the hands of men, and most of all "the Leader of this universe, the most blissful soul," and hence also one should chant the gods of the intelligible world and above them all, the great king of the beings *there*, and particularly "*in the multitude of the gods displaying his greatness*: for not to contract into one, but *to show divinity as of many, this is the function of those who know the power of God, when he, remaining who he is creates many who are, all of them, dependent upon him* [as under-gods, mediating to human needs] *and who exist on account of him and from him.*" It is curious

[1] Porphyry, *Vita Plotini*, 16.

how polytheism is thus coupled with a kind of monotheism[1].

Oracles, too, are thus claimed to be divine. Do not arrogate to yourselves that you are children of God, in some exclusive way, an idiotic conceit, as though a man were to imagine that he measured a thousand cubits, the others, five. (Quite like Celsus.) Do you fancy there is a special providence for you? In chapters 10–11 he distinctly refers to the Gnostic theosophy of Creation, Achamoth, etc. He sharply rejects their theory of evil. Was it then indeed before creation? They also claim that they can drive diseases from bodies by exorcism. All noble and fine things on earth are done away with by the pessimism of the Gnostics—what motive then or final aim have they for conduct? They neglect ethics, but there is no approach to God without virtue.

Despising the universe, they also despise the gods in it[2]. It is wickedness to despise the gods, for if one loves the father, one must also love the children (the under-gods). Now the mundane and sublunar gods are under the general Providence. They (the Gnostics) censure the bodily habitation; we do not, but praise the skill of the Creator and look forward to the time when the soul shall be relieved and need no housing any further. They (the Gnostics) will call the meanest men brothers, while they refuse so to call the sun and stars, or the soul of the world, with insane mouth! The Christians proper, as distinct from the Gnostics, probably did not sufficiently attract Plotinus, as they

[1] *Loc. cit.* II, 9, 4; 9, 6; 9, 8; 9, 9. Cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 41 A: "Ye gods of gods, whose creator I am and father of their achievements," etc., etc. Cf. *Testimonium Animae* (1908), p. 236.

[2] *Enneades*, II, 9, 16.

had no philosophy in their doctrines. "The philosophy of Plotinus was the last and the boldest attempt of the Hellenic mind to solve the riddle of the world and existence," but "he opened a wide door to enthusiasm and fanaticism" (Steinhart). As for his editor, biographer, and favourite disciple, Porphyry of Tyre (about 234–304 A.D.), he died about half a century before Augustine was born. His fifteen books "against the Christians" were much noted and drew a reply from Eusebius. They were burned in 435 A.D. by a decree of Theodosius II. Augustine often cites him.

The paganism of Porphyry (pupil of Longinus, and a deep student of Greek philosophy and an expert in Greek letters[1])—his paganism is much more positive than that of his master, as it was now still more in need of defence against the belief of the ever increasing Christians. One of his treatises dealt with the foremost thing in the actual popular religion, the cult-figures (*περὶ τῶν ἀγαλμάτων*). It was natural, he said, that the original devisers should have formed them out of wood and stone. But he goes further:

> The deity, kin to light, and living in an element of ethereal fire, but being invisible to our perception, connected with mortal life, inducted men by means of a radiant material such as crystal or Parian marble or ivory to the idea of his (the deity's) light, and through gold to the conception of fire and of his own incorruptibility, because gold is not liable to being stained. Many also of black marble symbolized his invisibility, and they formed the gods with human shapes, because the deity is rational—and comely, because the beauty [inherent in the gods] is undefiled—and in different attitudes and ages, rest, pose, and garments, and some male and some female and virgins, and youths and married, to present their difference. Hence all whiteness they allotted to the heavenly gods, the sphere and all

[1] *V.* Suidas, s.v.

the spherical [symbols] also, and specifically so to the universe and to sun and moon, sometimes also to Fortune and Hope, and the circle and circular [symbols] to Time and to the orbits in heaven,...and the segments of the circle to the phases of the moon, and pyramids and obelisks to the substance of Fire *and therefore also to the Olympian gods*; and as the cone to the sun, the cylinder to the earth, and to begetting and birth the phallus....

We owe this important citation to Eusebius[1]. The reader will at once perceive that Neoplatonism with all its refining symbolism, was so far from antagonizing polytheism as to buttress and defend it, actually striving to connect the *xoana* of idolatry with the One. We also discern, with startling clearness, why the Christians could not compromise with the Platonists, either of that or of the subsequent generations. Symbolism, in short, covered everything, explained everything, justified everything. It was essentially the same exegesis which, two hundred years before, Plutarch had applied to the Egyptian legends of Isis and Osiris. Hera is the lower *air*; Zeus the *ether*, which encircles and rules the universe; Leto (Λητώ) the symbol of the sublunar air, which has phases of light and darkness; Hestia and the hearth symbolize earth and domestic order. Similarly Rhea, Demeter, Kórê, Pluto, Dionysos, and Kerberus are explained.

The founders of the Stoic school had been much occupied in dovetailing the traditional religion of the Greeks into their own cosmic pantheism by allegory of physical forces and phenomena. But Porphyry and his disciples now went further. They set out to blend, and thus to strengthen (as they hoped), not only many figures of the Hellenic Olympus, but even to advance

[1] *Praeparatio Evangelica*, III, 7.

into non-Greek religions and worship in quest of analogous and comparable figures and phases of ethnical cults. All are simply "the forces upon and around our earth[1]." A certain figure in this supple exegesis is Themis, and in another phase of the same force it is Rhea and, again, Demeter. Similarly, the moon is also Artemis Lochia (who assists in childbirth), Athena, Hekate, Selene; here there is an irresistible trend towards fusion, as though that meant consolidation of all the pagan ethnical religions into a mighty unit, confronting and defying the ever advancing tide of Christianity. Now there is preserved by Eusebius, from Porphyry's work against Christianity, a curious paragraph which I must set down here:

"But now they marvel, if after so many years the plague has seized the capital, *when there is no longer any sojourn of Aesculapius and the other gods, for since Jesus is honoured, no one became aware of any public benefaction on the part of the gods*" (Eusebius, *loc. cit.* v, 1).

The pagan gods are here then presented as angry at Christian worship.

Porphyry was also an eager Pythagorean. He abstained from eating meat and wrote a life of Pythagoras, one of his ideals in the purification of the soul and in many rites thereto appertaining. Porphyry named the bodies which the soul of the sage of Samos had successively inhabited. There was also the close esoteric circle of adherents and a few miracles even, as when he appeared to friends at Metapontum and Tauromenium on the same day[2]. But I will best serve the general plan

[1] Ἡ περὶ γῆν δύναμις, Eusebius, *op. cit.* III, 11.

[2] Porphyry, *Vita Pythagorae*, 29. Even Mosheim in his day pointed out that the legends of Apollonius of Tyana arose out of the desire to counter-balance the miracles of Christ; cf. also B. L. Gildersleeve

of these studies and also serve the enduring interests of my readers if I set down a number of data derived from his treatise on abstaining from meat (*De Abstinentia*). He urges that if we do that, we will greatly further the purification of our souls, as well as the genuine vision of *that which is* (τὸ ὄν), our *ascent* (to the world of Forms or Ideas), which after all (for a pupil of Plotinus) is the best life[1]; besides we will thus eliminate or reduce the passions obstructing this; we will lay aside the inclination for mortality, through which *the descent* (our birth) occurred; all matter, all material things, are hostile to the soul. We must emancipate it from all concern for material pleasure or pain, from all that irrational matter in us which disturbs our soul-striving for *that which is*[2]. We must free our souls from all passion for the other sex. Our conduct herein must be resolutely consistent. The body must be the organ of the soul, no more. And so living and striving, why not emancipate our souls from desiring a superfluity of money, an abundance of slaves, elaborate furniture, no less than emancipate ourselves from many severe diseases and the need of physicians, and from the allurements of sexual indulgence? The average man, it is true, of the actual world, is deaf to this appeal. The wise worshipper, indeed, should limit himself to the first fruits offered up "*to the gods and to the Earth which produces the gods, for it* [the earth] *is the common hearthstone of both gods and men*" (II, 32).

(*Essays and Studies*, 1890, p. 251): "The Gospel incorporated in the life of our Saviour may have provoked the antagonists of the Christian faith to set up the ideals of the Way and the Truth in the Life of this or that hero of pagan philosophy."

[1] *Op. cit.* I, 29.

[2] Cf. Plato's *Phaedrus*.

Our highest duty is *assimilation to God*[1] and those about Him, and to be as unlike as possible to everyone who rejoices in mortal and material things. Men should not only with clean feet enter temples set apart for gods, but also should be "*clean in the temple of the Father, this world*" (II, 46)[2].

We meet here an undeniable elevation of spirituality in the Neoplatonic cult and profession, but let us look also on the other side of the shield. We must honour the gods with first fruits from the specific spheres of their benefactions. As regards the cult-figures Porphyry with evident approbation cites an utterance of Aeschylus, that the oldest cult-figures (the *xoana*), though of simple or rude workmanship, were deemed divine, while those of later and much more artistic fashioning "were indeed admired, but possessed less the reputation of a god[3]." Meat sacrifices, however, made worship costly and, besides, brought in a veritable swarm of evils, as superstition, luxury, the assumption that "one could bribe [δεκάζειν] thereby the deity, and heal unrighteousness by sacrifices" (*loc. cit.*). Of course, Porphyry adds, my appeal is only to the esoteric few, not to the general multitude, to the craftsmen of the trades, to those devoted to physical training, to the soldiers, sailors, orators, in a word, to those engaged in practical pursuits[4].

In setting forth to whom Porphyry would "sacrifice," he enumerates in order as follows: (1) To the God above all[5], to whom nothing material may be

[1] Cf. Plato's *Republic*, X, 613 B.

[2] *De Abstinentia*, I, 33, 41, 43, 47, 52; II, 43.

[3] II, 18. We observed this in Pausanias; cf. "Under the Antonines," ch. III.

[4] *De Abstinentia*, II, 12, 60; I, 27.

[5] Τῷ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν. Clement uses the term much, also Origen.

offered, not even speech uttered when one is stained with soul-passion, whom we worship by pure silence and by pure thoughts about Him; (2) further one must worship His offspring, the intelligible gods; to these we may actually voice our gratitude for the conceptions which they have furnished us; so the Pythagoreans deified some of their canonic numbers by calling them Athena, Artemis, Apollo; (3) we must sacrifice to the physical universe, the fixed stars and planets, to sun and moon, their leaders; we may kindle fire for them, without any meat offering, however; (4) to the good and the evil *daimones*, as Porphyry called them without distinction[1]. Many of them will inflict injury if angered[2], if the usual cult is withheld from them, and again they might benefit those who would strive to render them benign by prayers and sacrifices. They are in the sub-lunar sphere of the world, and there they have to do with animals, crops, rain showers, winds, calms at sea, temperatures, and seasons. Some of them convey messages, such as prayers, from men to gods, and oracles from gods to men. Sometimes they appear to men. Their souls last long, but are not eternal. The evil *daimones* strive always to inflict every sort of evil upon mankind, such as violent death or other sudden disaster. It is these who cause on earth plagues, earthquakes, droughts, and at the same time try to persuade men that the beneficent gods cause these things. They also fill the multitude with noxious or foolish passions for power, wealth or pleasure, and other deceptive notions, from which arise revolutions and wars[3].

[1] *I.e.* of the good or evil ones. The term occurs some forty times in Plato's works.

[2] Celsus has exactly the same notion.

[3] *Op. cit.* II, 34, 37, 38, 39–40.

We now turn to Iamblichus. A native of Coelesyria[1] and pupil of Porphyry, he brings us up to and into the times of Constantine, under whom he died 333 A.D. His religion, or religious philosophy, stretched out its tentacles to Babylon and Egypt. He was extolled by the Emperor Julian a "Saviour" (at least a kind of academic one) of Hellenism—let us say of classic Paganism—who sought to gain a harmony out of a multitude of strings. The descent from Plotinus to Iamblichus is strongly marked or striking, for it is a descent from lofty metaphysics to theurgy and related superstitions. It is curious that like his teacher, Porphyry, he too wrote on *cult-figures*[2] (περὶ ἀγαλμάτων). He tried to show that the idols were filled with the presence of the gods whom they represented, and that this divine immanence was possessed not only by the extremely ancient ones, called "fallen from heaven[3]," but also by those wrought with grace and skill in well attested times by definite masters.

Iamblichus does not seem to have shrunk even from the extremest asseverations in his life-long endeavour to prop idolatry by specious theory. His ideal was "such a knowledge through which we shall not disbelieve any statement handed down concerning the gods," that is to say, to maintain the traditional polytheism and keep a hold on the entire range of Hellenic mythology. Through him, as Zeller puts it, "for the first time [*sic*] Neoplatonism entirely entered the service of religion, and from a philosophical was turned into a theological doctrine." The gods rule, the *daimones* serve them. True theurgy has no concern with evil *daimones*.

[1] Suidas, s.v. [2] Photius, 215.
[3] Διοπετῆ. Cf. Acts xix, 35, and Euripides, *Iphigenia Taurica*, 977.

Men influence the gods, not by cogitation and lofty notions about them, "but the divine will is stirred into action by the divine agreements themselves[1]." Sacrifices are determined by the question whether the god involved belongs to the material or immaterial class. There is a craft of proper sacrificing which the priests must command. Most men must operate with material sacrifices as their souls are not sufficiently purified and elevated for the other.

That ill-balanced, impetuous, and precocious genius, the young Emperor Julian, rated Iamblichus[2] quite as high as "the great Plato" himself—Iamblichus, who (by his works) *initiated* the apostate into this theurgical lore. Elsewhere[3] that Emperor says that, after the gods, he loved and admired Iamblichus equally with Plato and Aristotle. Porphyry began, and Iamblichus carried forward the blending and fusion of the gods, leaping over the ancient bars of ethnical separateness and seeking and finding data for his *Theocrasia* in many other nations of the pagan world. Iamblichus, as far as we can see, himself coined this very term[4] and introduced it into Greek speech. Thus he found that priests in Cyprus fused Zeus, Hades, the Sun, and Sarapis. A specific power of one and the same god is Apollo, whether mantic, or leader of the Muses or father of Asclepios "whom he had with himself before the world[5]."

[1] *De Mysteriis Aegyptiacis*, II, 11, p. 96. Parthey: Τὰ δ' ὡς κυρίως ἐγείροντα τὴν θείαν θέλησιν αὐτὰ τὰ θεῖα ἐστι συνθήματα *I.e.* the higher and lower gods have a certain compact, a league of forces, as to what they will heed.

[2] *Orationes*, IV, 146 A.

[3] *Ibid.* VII, 217 B.

[4] Θεοκρασία, in his *Vita Pythagorae*.

[5] As though a parody on St John, Julian, *Orationes*, IV, 144 C.

NOTE. It is, we said, worthy of note, how classical Paganism sought self-preservation by giving a new life to the most spiritual form recorded in the history of Greek thought, fusing it at the same time with the idolatry practised by the multitude. How did Plato gain his immortal and pre-existent "*Forms*"? How did the greatest of ancient critics, Plato's own pupil, Aristotle, explain the process? Here, too, were included the One, the Good, the origin of souls, their descent, ascent, etc., etc. Sense-perception, Plato claimed, does present a series or body of phenomena which are ever changing and evanescent, and so afford no genuine knowledge or truth to the searching mind. Truth, therefore, Plato held, must be sought in *general abstractions* gained by a purely mental process. These "*Forms*" of truth, or "*Ideas*," as Aristotle[1] puts it, were or existed apart and distinct from the data or recurrent life of this our phenomenal world and its concrete instances. Socrates, the teacher of Plato, started this trend in the young Plato through his definitions, but Socrates, while claiming verity for them, did not give to these concepts gained by induction, any separate entity or existence. And, as Aristotle adds, Socrates was right in this. It is this separation of the general from the individual and concrete, which led Plato to his Ideas, in which the keen and sober Stagirite saw but a mere duplication of our world and its phenomena. How about the basic *elements* of things? Do eternal Forms also have *elements*? Plato had claimed that only through general or comprehensive abstraction or cogitative process could the soul of man ascend to those eternal Forms. And so the body, Plato taught, is a mere burden and a danger[2], and foolish are the souls for returning into bodies at all. Our highest happiness in the body is to be reminded of the eternal world of the Fair and Good, reminded of all such and similar Substances by the kindred phenomena of our sense-world[3], and that our soul was engaged in that felicity of contemplation before we were born and our souls descended from there. Through death, then, the soul, relieved from the burden of its body and resuming its autonomy, regained its essential function, viz. the happiness of contemplation and insight, the unhampered enjoyment of its intrinsic powers[4]. And therefore the highest ideal of this earthly

[1] *Metaphysics*, M, chap. 9, p. 1086 a, 35–1086 b. These two terms are synonymous.

[2] *Republic*, X, 621 A. [3] *Phaedo*, 76. [4] *Op. cit.* 64 (sqq.).

life too was *flight from this world* (a world of mere sense and seeming), and the assimilation to God, *i.e.* in attaining a high degree of contemplation. All this, however, to be for an élite of higher minds; the Platonic system (somewhat like the Transcendentalism of Brook Farm near Boston) never was meant to be a Gospel for the poor or the many. As for the actual worship of gods, Plato[1] freely recognized that it was largely a matter of public regulation in the various states; these gods of political tradition not merely may, but should, be defended and their worship maintained; they are, in a way, the *creatures of Law*. Now the primary Soul (or Life) moves (or creates) all organic things out of mere matter; it directs also the wonderful order of the celestial orbits and the forces moving the Sun (in the same way in which our soul moves our body) we must call "*gods*[2]." The Earth too is called a deity[3]. Thus the metaphysician maintained a safe regard for the popular religion[4]. Was it mere prudent accommodation? Had Plato, for himself, cast aside the polytheism of the Hellenic world? Zeller thinks he had; Grote thinks not, and refers to the "prayers to the gods, to whom we sacrifice on each occasion" (*Leges*, VII, 801 A), only we must not ask evil things of them. Plato (very properly) intimates that "the poets" had too much to do with shaping and settling the popular ideas about religion. He was well aware that youth accepted the myths literally, without any refining allegory. He speaks of "all the gods" as the greatest of guardians, and he lays down a threefold thesis: "I, They are; II, they are concerned for men; III, it is impossible to gain their support against righteousness" (*loc. cit.* 801 B). The impious (clearly those who deny the gods of the commonwealth) shall be brought to trial "in accordance with the laws"; if any governmental power neglects this, it shall itself be tried for impiety. Plato further recognizes the traditional grades of god, *daimon*, *heros*, and the grades or forms of worship suitable for each are set forth in this order[5]: (1) The Olympian gods and those which hold the (given) commonwealth; the gods of the Lower World; (2) the *daimones* (spirits); (3) the *heroes*, or super-men; (4) the private establish-

[1] *Leges*, X, 889 E sq. Celsus entertained kindred ideas.
[2] *Ibid.* X, 899 B.
[3] *Timaeus*, 40 B.
[4] Zeller, *Philos. d. Griechen*, 3rd ed., II, 1, p. 790.
[5] *Leges*, X, 907 A; 907 E; VII, 818 C; *Republic*, IV, 427 C; *Leges*, IV, 717 B.

ments (*ἱδρύματα ἰδία*) of paternal gods enacted in ritual in consonance with law; (5) the living parents. This, then, for the multitude and for the citizens at large, and it was supremely easy in any Greek community even for a "sage" to maintain his conformity with the current anniversaries of his state, anniversaries which had a bearing on the history and reputed origin and annals of the given commonwealth—but no concern whatever with sin or death or eternity or any absolute moral law. But apart from these institutional rites of tradition, there was Plato's personal and esoteric aspiration for the world of the *Eternal Forms* and his metaphysically constructed Heaven. As a matter of fact, in the dialogues of Plato the singular God greatly outnumbers the plural gods. A few statements concerning the former should in fairness be cited before we close this chapter. Evil of necessity has its sphere on earth among men. Therefore we must attempt to flee *from here thither* (the *Leitmotiv* of much of Plotinus) as quickly as possible. This is done through assimilation with God as far as possible, that is, by becoming righteous and holy, coupled with understanding[1]. After rejecting as morally offensive many of the Homeric legends of gods, he demands that poets, whether of epic or tragedy, endow God with moral perfection and as a Being not responsible for evils. We may observe that in his discourse he readily substitutes for *God* the term *the Good* (*i.e.* the abstract neuter *τὸ ἀγαθόν*) and again varies this with *God*, by a parity of nomenclature[2]. In the esoteric cult and the ecstatic flights of the Neoplatonists it was particularly the *Phaedrus* of Plato (especially from 245 C) which held a dogmatic, nay oracular, honour. The Soul (or Life) is eternally pre-existent, because ever-moved without mechanical or material cause, and so must be uncreated and likewise imperishable in all future time. Its form as for man is compared by the Attic metaphysician to a charioteer and pair of steeds (really Intelligence ruling Will and Appetite). The incarnation of a soul is really a kind of fall, descent or humiliation, but by striving to recall its original home the soul begins to assume a feathering and yearns to fly back thither to that abode of bliss, where "Zeus" led the choir of the Blessed and where the metaphysical aspirations of our handicapped and hampered intelligence are changed to a reality of vision and to the felicity of perfect insight.

[1] *Theaetetus*, 176 A–B. [2] *Republic*, II, 379 A sqq.

The Gospel, on the other hand, is all-comprehensive and offered to all, not only to a little esoteric band metaphysically trained. The Gospel appeals to and deals with the actual sinfulness of all mankind and the soul's craving for redemption. Nothing, I dare say, has ever been gained for Christianity by any support of any philosophical speculation or sect; and this is the deeper reason why its mundane appearance must ever be that of an *ecclesia militans*. St John's Gospel is particularly that one in which its own higher spiritual significance is curiously blended with the glowing words of actual concrete reminiscence of that disciple whom Jesus loved, and who, while he was a nephew of Mary, declined to place his own name in juxtaposition to that of the Incarnate Word. The single parable of the Prodigal Son, if only man's eyes are opened to his spiritual self, is both a surpassing revelation and consolation, compared with which all the dithyrambic flights in Plato's myths are what to a famishing wanderer is some splendid baronial hall hung with arras, figures to look at, nothing more.

CHAPTER VII

IN THE ERA OF DIOCLETIAN

CARACALLA, the cruel elder son of Septimius Severus, perished through Macrinus, commander of the Imperial Guard, in 217 A.D. In the very next year this short-lived Emperor was in turn slain while fleeing from the unspeakable Elagabalus, priest of the Sun and incarnation of every possible form of sexual depravity. This monster in turn was killed by his own praetorians after the world had endured him for four years, in 222 A.D. A nobler youth succeeded, known in history as Alexander Severus, but he, too, was done to death by his own troops, on the Rhine, in 235 A.D.

After this the emperors, one and all, were simply military pretenders, creatures of their own legions. None of them succeeded in establishing a dynasty. Persians, Goths, Sarmatians, Franks, Alemanni, began to overrun the frontier provinces of the Empire, the integrity of which was more and more threatened by its vastness. At the same time the inner unity and loyalty of the subjects were felt by the Roman officials to be gravely impaired by the aloofness of the religious sect ever growing at the cost of the idolatrous nations —felt perhaps by some statesmen of Rome to be a state within the state—the Christian church, an element of disintegration.

In 258 A.D. the Emperor Valerian issued a rescript to the Roman Senate, not only naming bishops, presbyters, and deacons as objects of judicial prosecution, but

decreeing also that senators and "honourables" (*egregii*) and Roman knights, who were Christians, should lose their ranks and fortunes, and if they persisted in their religion, their lives also[1]. We observe at once the spread of the Christian religion and worship among the higher classes. The words of the official utterance of the Proconsul at Carthage, in passing sentence of death on Bishop Cyprian, in September, 258, are a suggestive document of those times:

> For a long time thou hast lived in a sacrilegious frame of mind and hast gathered very many men into thy wicked conspiracy and hast made thyself an enemy of the Roman gods and of the statutes of religion...and their most august majesties Valerian and Gallienus and the Caesar Valerian could not recall you to the sect of their own ceremonies....Let sound tradition [*disciplina*] be enforced by your blood (*Vita* of Cyprian, by the Deacon Pontius).

This aloofness of the Christians, as we clearly see, was officially and by the foremost representative of Rome in that province branded as civil or political treason or sedition, treason in the underlying convictions, sedition in the practice of religious dissent and non-conformity with the rites of the commonwealth. When in 271 A.D. the Marcomanni had invaded northern Italy, the Emperor Aurelian sent orders to Rome to have the Sibylline books consulted, and the Senate subsequently recorded its official conviction, that the gods had aided the state in recognition of the sacrifices prescribed by the Sibylline records[2]. Aurelian had

[1] Cyprian, *Epistolae*, 80.

[2] Vopiscus, *Life of Aurelian*, 20 (from a letter of Aurelian): "Miror vos, patres sancti, tam diu de aperiendis Sibyllinis dubitasse libris, perinde quasi *in Christianorum ecclesia*, non in templo deorum omnium tractaretis." Also the Emperor offers captives for human sacrifice.

inherited from his mother the cult of the Sun. To it at Rome he dedicated a huge temple with anniversary games and on one of his own coins antiquarians still read: "The Sun, Lord of the Roman Empire[1]."

When, in 276 A.D., Probus, a Pannonian of exceptional military energy, had been elevated to the principate, the senators at Rome thus acclaimed his name: "Di te servent! tuere nos! tuere rempublicam!...Tu Francicus, tu Gothicus, tu Sarmaticus, tu omnia!" ("May the gods preserve thee! Protect us! Protect the State!...Thou art conqueror of the Franks, thou of the Goths, of the Sarmatians! Thou art everything!") and the first speaker in the Senate said among other things—the session was in the Temple of Concord in Rome, February 3, 277 A.D.: "Jupiter optimus Maximus, thou Juno the Queen and thou leader of excellencies Minerva, thou Concord of the world and thou Roman Victory, grant this to the Roman Senate and people, grant to the soldiers and allies and foreign nations: may he rule as he has pursued his military career!" After splendid achievements, this Pannonian Probus was murdered, in his native Danubian region of Sirmium, by his own troops, because he compelled them to work at draining marshes.

Passing over the brief years of Carus and his sons, we take up *Diocles* or *Diocletianus*. A Dalmatian of humblest origin, he was in 284 commander of the household troops (*domestici*), and was acclaimed Emperor by the Roman troops on the Asiatic side of the Bosporus. It cannot be my design even summarily to relate here the chief events of his reign, a work done by Gibbon,

[1] "Sol Dominus Imperi Romani." Eckhel, *Doctrina Numorum Veterum*, VII, 483.

and later by Schiller and Seeck. Still we stop to note or urge one thing, viz. that a single chapter of the Christian apologist Lactantius[1] permits a closer vision of the Dalmatian than all the slender data gatherable from secular compilers, such as Eutropius or Aurelius Victor. Diocletian attempted a system of co-regents and sub-regents (*Augusti* and *Caesares*) which was to provide for the integrity and cohesion of the Empire, while insuring it against the rising of military pretenders. But this system failed even during his own lifetime; his retired co-regent, Maximianus Herculius, attempted to resume power; and the rise of Constantine in the north-west was accomplished without the initiative or even the consent of the other dynasts. The multiplication of courts and imperial co-regents and sub-regents caused a corresponding increase in the armies and in the chronic exactions of officialdom. In many provinces the tillers of the soil abandoned their ploughs and fields, goaded to despair by the ever-rising taxation[2], and forests grew up where arable lands had been.

With a certain cunning of administrative policy Diocletian subdivided the provinces, to weaken the governors and at the same time to attach them more firmly to the central powers. His efforts to establish by an edict maximum prices for commodities[3] is preserved for us by an inscription much discussed by historians and economists, but Lactantius says of it: "Then on account of petty and cheap objects, much

[1] *De mortibus Persecutorum*, c. 7.

[2] "Ut, enormitate indictionum consumptis viribus colonorum, desererentur agri et culturae verterentur in silvam" (Lactantius, *loc. cit.* 7).

[3] *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, III, 801 sqq.

blood was shed nor did any commodity come forth, from fear, and dearth rose to a more desperate degree, until the law, from sheer necessity after the death of many persons, was abolished." The Dalmatian emperor also strove to commemorate his name by huge building operations, such as his *thermae* in Rome, whose ruins even now are gigantic. As for Nicomedia in Bithynia, equidistant almost from Danube and Euphrates, he strove to make it into a new capital for the Empire, while Rome more and more shrunk into a vast and stately memorial and museum of the past. It was dangerous, in his reign, says Lactantius, to betray any prosperity to the eyes of his fiscal officials and tax collectors.

It was during his reign, so symptomatic of the irresistible process of imperial dissolution, that Arnobius, a Roman rhetor of Sicca in Africa, wrote his apologetic work, Against the Pagans (*Adversus Nationes*). We will leave on one side the slender data concerning him penned by Jerome[1] and take up at once his work, which in texture and design is worthy of much more attention than is generally bestowed on this earnest defender of his newly acquired faith. Like Minucius Felix, Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, and Augustinus himself, he was trained to become, and became, a professional teacher of pleading in the actual world of that time. This was a profession which implied (as in Quintilian's

[1] And chronologically quite impossible; as Neander observed: the anecdote that he hurriedly wrote this work in order to gain the consent of the Bishop to his baptism (Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus*, 79) is a very improbable legend. "Rather Arnobius appears like one who had been led to the faith after a long protracted examination" (Neander). Dr Bigg did not include Arnobius in his study of the Origins of Christianity, 1909.

Tenth Book) a high degree of familiarity with the entire range of classic letters, on the one hand; no less, however, through the essential postulate of mastering the theory of argumentation, was it kept in living touch with dialectic and many other elements of philosophy, whose chief schools then of necessity were familiarly known to the more aspiring members of that profession.

His style in many ways has an archaic colouring for which he deliberately strove; he was a particularly careful reader of the older Annalists (such as Cincius, Piso, and others), of Lucretius, of the books of the older Etruscan lore (*Tages*), with which the ancestral "religion" of Rome was much connected; Varro, the prince of Roman antiquarians, was familiar to him as well as were other experts, such as Nigidius Figulus or Granius who dealt with the many puzzles enshrouding the origins of Roman ritual[1]. In revealing his own personality, he throws much light on his own times and generation, especially in the domain of spiritual things. We observe that he had earnestly studied philosophy, that he had, before his conversion, absorbed the prevailing reverence for Plato and Pythagoras, but had, at the same time actually worshipped the cult-figures of popular tradition.

I used to worship, O blindness, but recently, cult-figures [*simulacra*] just taken from the potter's oven, gods fashioned on anvils, and the product of hammers, elephant's tusks, paintings, fillets on decaying trees. Whenever I beheld a marble figure smeared and daubed with olive oil, *as though there dwelled in it an actual Power*[2], I was wont to flatter it, accost it and demand benefits from an unconscious block of wood.

[1] Cf. Ovid's *Fasti*, *Festus* (Verrius Flaccus), *Servius*, *Macrobius*, *Censorinus*.

[2] "Tamquam inesset vis praesens" (the *numen*) (*Adversus Nationes*, I, 39).

His professional familiarity with all the range of *grammaticus* and *rhetor* lies before us, from the inflexion of verbs and nouns and the training in artistic style to syllogisms and the technical classification of law cases and to delicate points in applied logic and in ethics. Arnobius knew well Plato's *Phaedrus*, *Theaetetus*, *Republic*, *Timaeus*, *Phaedo*, *Meno*, no less than Epicurus and his Latin disciple Lucretius, also Epictetus, the Stoic preacher of Nicopolis, or Hermippus on Zoroaster —all this, it would seem, in his pre-Christian period, in that searching after soul satisfaction which he seems to have shared with others who ultimately became Christians and Christian apologists—an inward experience much greater than one merely academic, of which the deist Gibbon could not, and surely did not, form any just or adequate appreciation in his fifteenth and sixteenth chapters.

Arnobius over and again confronts the Platonists of his own time, whom we now are accustomed to call Neoplatonists. God and the soul are the great themes that concern both him and them, and while his Biblical lore is not very profound as yet, a famous utterance of St Paul[1] has settled in his soul. Evidently the Platonic doctrine of the soul (the soul descended from, and indeed fallen from, its divine origin and sphere in the realm of eternal forms and truth) was held in a quasi-dogmatic way as superior to the Christian faith[2].

Arnobius surveys the chief tenets of classic philosophy, from Thales to the scepticism of Carneades and further to the Neopythagorean, Numenius of Apamea,

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 19, which he cites in effect: "Numquam *illud vulgatum* [evidently much quoted by Christians] perstrinxit aures vestras, sapientiam hominis stultitiam esse apud deum primum?"

[2] *Adversus Nationes*, II, 7.

to whom Plotinus was said to have owed much of his lore[1]. But as for himself, the rhetor of Sicca had emancipated his soul from all of it. Again and again he measures matters of Christian faith, as of the Resurrection and of the Last Judgment, with Plato's tenets of the soul[2]. What rest or satisfaction, *e.g.* in the eternal process of the soul's passing from incarnation to incarnation, or in the doctrine of Epicurus, that each soul is extinguished for ever by physical death? His main point is this: You (Platonists), you trust for the salvation of your souls to yourselves and to your efforts from within, while we (Christians) for this trust in Christ, and submit ourselves to the name and majesty of Him from whom we hope both, viz. to escape from a death of suffering and to be endowed with eternity of life (II, 34).

Distinct from this is Arnobius' dealing with the pagan gods and their cult. If they *are* gods, why not rather leave their defence to themselves (I, 20)? Of course, there is the outcry of those who are interested in the maintenance of the cult for their living (*e.g.* the *haruspices*). "The gods are neglected," they shout, "and there are very few people in the temples[3]!" The gods are angry, because you Christians are practising wicked and unheard-of forms of worship all over the world. As Plato's *Timaeus* had provided for a class of *undergods* (by which the cultured pagans consistently strove to uphold polytheism), Arnobius calls them *servuli* (I, 28), *i.e.* secondary and *created* gods. His critique

[1] *E.g.* by Amelius, a disciple of Plotinus: Arnobius, *Adversus Nationes*, II, 11.

[2] II, 13–14.

[3] "Negleguntur dii, clamitant, atque [in] templis iam raritas summa est" (I, 24).

of these things is his own. There are some 10,000 figures, *e.g.*, of Vulcan in actual worship. In which of these does his *numen* reside (VI, 19)? If these *are* gods, they must needs be pure, holy, eternal. Can God rejoice in the slaughter of innocent beasts? Is He dominated by passions? Is it not silly to believe that He can be directed or amused by human games? What has divinity to do with sex? How can there be evil gods? Do the gods smell? Can wine make a god propitious? How can garlands or timbrels gain the good will of a real god? Or must He be waked? We see in a way Lucian and Pausanias passing once more before us.

After all (thus Arnobius sums up, VII, 34 sqq.) it is this way: Men naïvely conceived gods like unto themselves; but men cannot of themselves attain a true knowledge of the Deity; they are helpless there; they need a revelation rising quite above our narrow vision and power (book VII entire). Venus the tutelary power of prostitutes (III, 27)! If the gods do what you say, they cannot be gods (III, 28). How can the abstractions of the Roman state religion be gods (IV, 1)? How about the scandalous and stainful things of Greek mythology? Arnobius wrote this work about 300 A.D.[1]

Clearly the Christians more and more were held responsible for any plague in nature, or for any danger or disaster happening to the Empire[2]. The gods, so the current opinion had it, were angry at the Christian

[1] "Trecenti sunt anni ferme,...ex quo coepimus esse Christiani et terrarum in orbe censeri" (I, 13). Also "Ante trecentos annos religio, inquit, vestra non fuit" (II, 71).

[2] "Christianorum, inquiunt, causa mala omnia di ingerunt, et interitus comparatur a superis frugibus" (I, 13). "Nostra quidem nihil interest, quorum causa contenditis *exterminatos* [*self-banished*] *esse ab terris deos*" (V, 15).

religion and so withheld their favours (I, 16 sq.); the Christians were the cause of visitations or trouble. But, they say, the gods are not angry with you because you worship *one* Almighty God, but "because you insist that one born a human being, and, what is disgraceful even to persons of low degree, slain by the execution of the cross, was divine, and you believe that He still survives and you worship Him with daily supplications" (I, 36).

Sometimes the reader of Arnobius is almost inclined to believe that he hears some echo of the approaching tread of the cruel persecution itself, the one which is indelibly associated with the names of Diocletian and Galerius. "If *we* were to undermine in as many ways and in as many judgments [as you do, by admitting that your so-called gods are but parts of the physical order] the faith in your gods, it would be doubtful to no one, but that, roused by anger and fury, you would demand against us the stake, wild beasts, the sword, and other forms of execution, *with which you are wont to quench your thirst by the seeking of our blood*" (III, 36). Time, we see, has in no wise bridged the very deep and wide chasm which separated the Christian and the non-Christian subjects of the Roman Empire. It is ever *You* and *We*; the consciousness of the schism and antagonism is veritably throbbing in the pages of Arnobius. These are indeed a document of history, from which we must make some transcriptions:

> Is it this [religious belief of our own] on account of which you yourselves, when the cruel mood has come over you, strip us of our property, banish us from our ancestral homes, visit capital punishment upon us, torture us, rend us, burn us to death, and finally throw us to wild beasts and their tearing fangs [I, 26]?
>
> We are dubbed ill-omened and atheists [I, 29].

Why do you shudder at the mention of our name as the worst of omens [I, 35]?

Even more bitter are the following words, and one marvels how Arnobius dared to publish them at all:

Your tyrants and kings, who, setting aside the fear of the gods, despoil and rob the treasures of temples[1], who strip cities by proscription, exile, and the slaughter of their aristocracy, who with brutal lust undermine and wrest away the chastity of matrons and maidens, [these] you call native gods [*indigetes*] and consecrated for worship [*divos*] and those whom it was more seemly to have them torn to pieces by you, these you extol with feasting-cushions [*pulvinaria*], with altars, temples, and other worship, and with public holidays of games on their birthdays [I, 65].

The times are stern and full of dangers [II, 78].

Evidently the persecution had not yet been officially begun, but even in Rome, in the Senate, voices were heard which urged that some of Cicero's philosophical books (like book III, *De Natura Deorum*) should be suppressed, because they furnished material to the defenders of Christianity (*Adversus Nationes*, III, 7). But I must add an utterance which could hardly have been written down before the time when at Nicomedia the persecution, primarily of churches and clergy and Scriptures, had actually been inaugurated:

You allow your gods in the theatres to be made the objects of indecent burlesques before crowded audiences roaring with laughter, while authors [perhaps like Lucian, in dramatization] are learned by heart; how lax and liberal are you there! But how sternly do you deal with us! For why have our writings deserved to be burned? Why have our chapels[2] deserved to be outrageously demolished, in which the supreme God is invoked, in which peace and grace is besought for magistrates, armies, kings, friends, enemies [*Adversus Nationes*, IV, 36]?

[1] He *could* have had in mind Caesar, Antony, Caligula, Nero, Domitian, perhaps also Elagabalus, etc.—Galerius?

[2] *Conventicula*. Lactantius also uses this term.

Firmianus Lactantius[1] is somewhat better known than Arnobius to the general student of the history of the Christian church. A rhetor of uncommon distinction in the province of Africa, he received a call from Nicomedia (then the virtual capital of the Empire) to teach Latin rhetoric there; he was as familiar with Greek letters also, as his contemporary Eusebius was *not* with Latin. And he was at the centre of affairs when the storm broke. Of his manual of Instruction in Christian Theology (*Divinae Institutiones*) we cannot here present even a bare outline. But we know that it was conceived at Nicomedia and was projected as a rejoinder to Hierocles, a pagan official there of very high rank who published an attack on the Christian faith, which attack he called "Friend of Truth" (Φιλαλήθης), in which among other things he extolled Apollonius of Tyana (contemporary of Nero and of Domitian) as a worker of miracles equal to those of Christ, a treatise to which Eusebius, too, made reply, though limiting himself entirely to this matter of the Tyanite. Lactantius does not name Hierocles where (v, 2) he describes the man and the book. The African rhetor was actually then teaching in Nicomedia, when the Christian church there —later it would have been called a cathedral—was razed to the ground early in the spring of 303 A.D.

Another one of these pagan controversialists was a teaching philosopher there, who sometimes dined with Diocletian himself, but whose private conduct was grossly inconsistent with his lectures; he published his attack on Christianity in three books during the persecution. The aim of this publication was to "recall the Christians to the true way, that is, to the worship of

[1] Jerome, *Catalogus*, 80.

the gods by whose power and majesty the world was governed." The abler of the two must have been Hierocles, who at one time had been a Christian; his knowledge of Scripture was too close and detailed, Lactantius suggests, to permit any other inference. His polemic was chiefly directed against Peter and Paul, while the other apostles were presented as ignorant and as disseminators of falsehood.

The language of Lactantius is polished and truly classical, as one could expect of one who had attained such professional eminence in his own generation, and whose training in the presentation of fictitious law cases had greatly developed his dialectic faculty (I, 1), although he never pleaded in actual courts (III, 13). His citations from Plautus, Terence, Horace, Vergil, Sallust, Lucilius or Persius, are felicitous and pertinent, and these authors are clearly still precious to him for other than spiritual truth. Also he is conversant with Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Cyprian, and other defenders of the Christian faith, though he finds fault with the one last named. The pagan philosophers, he urged, cared little for Scripture quotation; it was a waste of effort in Cyprian—but the true way was to use their own authors as much as possible[1].

Philosophy and the polytheism of the past are equally confronted by Lactantius, and the former is to furnish him material for his polemic against the latter. One might indeed say that it was a slight task to demolish polytheism then; very true, but still the fanaticism of ancestral tradition, the elaborate polemic of leading

[1] "Nihil fortasse apud eos agemus, nisi eos de suis doceamus auctoribus" (*Divinae Institutiones*, V, 14). Unless otherwise indicated, further quotations from Lactantius are from this work.

thinkers such as Porphyry, Iamblichus, Hierocles, and above all the mighty power of an autocratic and fairly universal empire—all this now was fused into one overwhelming and irresistible instrument of coercion. As regards the sternest of these instruments, the state, Lactantius lays down the noble thesis, *that religion, in its very essence, must be untrammelled, unforced, free.* "Who can impose upon me the necessity either of worshipping what I do not want, or of not worshipping what I do want" (v, 13)? "Religion cannot be forced" (v, 19). No benefit would come to the polytheism of the secular government through blood and tortures—"Nihil est enim tam voluntarium quam religio" (*loc. cit.*).

Now his great aim was to combine philosophy with religion and to show that Christianity is not incompatible with true culture. His method of procedure is somewhat like this: He cites some thesis or utterance, as found, *e.g.*, in Cicero or in Plato or with the Stoics, but not so as to adjust Christian tenets to these theses[1], but as a rule he goes on to show that the solution is no solution at all, or inadequate, or is spiritually futile or otherwise unsatisfactory. Thus Lactantius utilizes particularly Cicero's *Laws* and *Republic*, the *Tusculan disputations*, the *De Deorum Natura*, and other works, or Seneca, or the Second Satire of Persius. He remarks that Cicero was afraid of spreading religious dissent among the common people (II, 3). He sharply censures Cicero's theory of the creation, viz. that matter was pre-existent. And Lactantius is fully aware of Cicero's characteristic vagueness and indefiniteness, imbibed by the latter from the pabulum of the Academic school (II, 8).

[1] As Clement of Alexandria had done.

Similarly on the Aim of Life, on Immortality, on God, he cites Cicero or Plato or some other leader of ancient thought, but he rarely assents, of course, because they could not but limit themselves to the narrower perspective of this life of the body or in the body, whereas the concerns of the soul postulated a transcendental and eternal point of interest. He calls attention to the fact, that Cicero himself (in the *Consolatio*) adopted Euhemerism as the true explanation of religious worship; veneration of extraordinary men after their death, and the Latin reproduction of Euhemerus by Ennius is ever at the elbow of Lactantius. He finds indeed in Plato a purer conception of God than in other systems. "Plato, who is held the greatest philosopher of all, plainly and openly defends monarchy [*i.e.* a kind of monotheism] and does not call it Ether or Nature [as the Stoics did] but, as it is, God" (1, 5). Still Lactantius is far from being satisfied with him: "Plato has said many things about *one God* by whom he says the universe was established, but nothing about religion; for he had dreamed God, not recognized Him[1]."

A great deal of what is best in Lactantius is of enduring value, and may be called philosophy of religion. For while the philosophical sects of Greek antiquity may now seem to us to have retired into a certain penumbra of eruditional or historical remoteness, the aspirations of the soul were not then, and are not now, satisfied with the bald positivism limited to the enumeration of physical phenomena, or with a process of a chain of syllogisms operating without an initial thesis of transcendental character. Lactantius, too, in his day, notes the wide dissent of the sects in Ethics, and that

[1] "Somniaverat enim deum, non cognoverat" (v, 14).

most of the achievements of the systems were, in the main, negative, whereas for him there is a body of aspirations and valuations quite different. "Of how much greater price is the soul than the body, of so much greater value is God than the world, because God made the world and rules it" (III, 9). He goes on to discuss Design and Providence, also the specific trait of man among all the creatures, viz. his innate faculty of religious aspiration no less than his striving after wisdom. Socrates wisely limited himself to ethics. Both Cicero's and Seneca's definitions are questioned (III, 14–15). The lives of most philosophers belie their professions[1]. As for Epicureanism, which then had an enormous vogue, it is all things to all men (III, 17). That school preaches mere atomism and spontaneous physical evolution and denies design[2]; there is no creation and no creator.

Further on Lactantius deals with the Pythagoreans and the Soul, and the idea that the incarnation of souls in various forms of bodies and lives was a retributive act. Claiming next that doing and living were greater than contemplation and thinking, he very justly urges the moral impotence of philosophy, whereas Christianity had wrought moral changes notable and incisive, changes which were constantly verified within any one's experience: "Give me a man who is wrathful, foul-mouthed, unbridled. By a very few words I will render him as peaceful as a lamb." So with greed, with lust, with the fear of death. Baptism at that time was a ceremony of vast import and bestowed only after a long period of study and probation.

[1] III, 115. This quite like Lucian, whom he knew.
[2] "Omnia sua sponte fieri necesse est."

As for the pantheism of the Stoics, Lactantius keenly recognizes it as such, and rejects it. "Nature" has no life in itself (III, 28)—the very *crux* of modern materialism—and finally Lactantius says with superb simplicity: "Nature is not God, but the work of God[1]." The only power that remains a divinity with untold numbers—as we saw in a former chapter—is *Luck*. After this Lactantius delineates Scriptural revelation[2], from Moses onward to the Logos and the Virgin-birth, the God-man and Mediator, His wondrous work and His suffering under Pontius Pilate[3], His death and tomb. He also referred to the Gnostic sects, who abandoned the doctrine of the church (IV, 20) and "have ceased to be Christians[4]."

All genuine moral regeneration must issue from Christianity (book V); it is impossible with polytheism. Taking up then the Christian virtues, or the virtues in their Christian conception, he discusses them both as over against the ethical systems of Greek philosophy as well as the actual social condition of the pagan world. Before the Christian God only all men were equal, whereas "Greeks and Romans held men unequal in many stations, from the poor to the rich, from the humble to the powerful, from private persons in fine to the most lofty powers of kings" (V, 14). Christianity alone had a spiritual standard for all human concerns. Theories of morals were impotent without theological knowledge, while Plato and Aristotle had *no practical followers*. There was absolutely no spiritual content in

[1] "Non est deus Natura, sed dei opus."

[2] "Vera sapientia" (c. IV).

[3] Like Tertullian, he blunders in making Pontius Pilate the governor of all Syria.

[4] "Christiani esse desierunt."

the deadness of pagan ritual and worship, whose concern was exclusively for secular and material objects such as wealth, honours, powers of government (v, 21), what they see—"They know nothing but the earth" (vi, 1). Even the Roman poet Persius had derided the inanities of these superstitions in his second Satire, in his own way; how futile to believe one could purchase a slight hearing from the gods (v, 30) with a dishful of lungs or some spiced milk. As for actual polytheism, it was weak before any moral judgment or any dialectic analysis, but immensely strong through the unquestioning practice of state and family in untold generations.

As for the trend of Lactantius' polemic, it is of course not essentially different from that of Arnobius: The people's gods, their numbers, their limitations, their coming into existence through sexual begetting; the amours of Zeus; the eagle and Ganymede placed at the base of Jupiter cult-figures and worshipped jointly with him (i, 11). Seneca wrote frankly about the salacious father of gods and men (i, 16).

But we must go forward to a body of utterances, which we may conceive as records and documents of the times of Diocletian. In eloquent words the Roman rhetor condemns the ideals of Rome and of her history: "And that there was no other road to immortality than to lead armies, to lay waste the lands of others, to destroy cities, raze towns, slaughter free peoples or enslave them" (i, 18). The very persecution of Diocletian and Galerius comes before us:

> And therefore they torture the worshippers of the supreme God, that is, righteous men; they kill them, drive them into exile;...they heap cruel deeds high upon their errors; and minds dedicated to God [clearly the clergy are meant] they tear from the disembowelled bodies [v, 1].

There are weak Christians too; "very many are tottering [*nutant plurimi*] and particularly those who have had some literary culture" (*loc. cit.*).

The Christians are now treated as public enemies: They harass them therefore, and torture them with newly designed forms of penalties, and are not satisfied with putting to death those whom they hated, unless even cruelty makes sport of their bodies [v, 9].

The following would seem to allude to Diocletian or Galerius or the central government:

Of this so great beast..., which lying in one spot [at Nicomedia] nevertheless throughout the world is raging with iron teeth, but grinds even the bones into bits and spends its fury on the ashes, lest there be any spot of burial, as though they who confess God strove for this that people should come to their burial-places.... The earth is denied to the dead [v, 11].

Officials are eager to accelerate their own advancement by obeying or more than obeying the Edict of Nicomedia, as one in Phrygia who burned the whole congregation together with the church in which they were assembled (v, 11). The general order of the Edict was, at first, to torture the victims to the point of compliance, but not to kill them (*loc. cit.*). The jurists, such as the famous Domitius Ulpian (in his work, *De Officio Proconsulis*), some eighty years before had gathered imperial decrees and discussions of jurists dealing with the Christians[1], "in order to set forth what punishments should be meted out to those who confessed themselves worshippers of God" (*loc. cit.*).

But whereas our numbers are ever swelled [by accessions] from the worshippers of the gods, and are never lessened, not even right amid the persecution itself.... And deem those foolish, who, when they had it in their power to avoid execution,

[1] Of course, these things were not incorporated in the Digest by Justinian's Commission, more's the pity.

still prefer to be tortured and give up the ghost, when *they* [the officials] can clearly see from that very thing that it is not foolishness, in which so many thousands of human beings throughout the whole world agree in one and the same conviction [v, 13].

Gibbon—of whom his sympathetic biographer, Leslie Stephen, says that he held the philosophy of Voltaire—Gibbon has belittled the motives of the Christians in his own way (and obedient to the behests of his own philosophy) and in order to depreciate their faith. Let us, therefore, give further audience to the contemporary observer, Lactantius:

If one province, one nationality, lacks wisdom [because it adheres to Christianity], all the others must needs have understanding of the right. But since from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof, the Law of God has been undertaken, and every sex, every age and nationality and stretch of country in one and the same spirit serve God, and there is everywhere the same endurance, the same contempt of death, they [the Roman officials] should have realized, that there must be some reason in this matter why not without cause it is defended to the death[1].

They might escape it all by throwing some grains of incense with three fingers upon the little perpendicular altar, called *focus* (vi, 18).

But we must now look at the official acts of Diocletian and his sub-regent Galerius, acts aimed probably at knitting more closely together the subjects of the Empire and removing the deep fissure in its constituency and cohesion, if it were possible. Now Lactantius and Eusebius, without any concert whatever, attest the main fact with an agreement rarely excelled in ancient history, and so furnish records not to be belittled, not even by Edward Gibbon. Both Christian writers were contemporaries and of maturest faculties. "The destruc-

[1] Lactantius writes in the present tense. Of course, the work could not have been *published* before the recantation of Galerius, 311 A.D.

tion of the places of prayer" is the phrase by which the church historian designates the first act of the persecution[1]. Galerius even in the winter before the spring of 303 had ordered all his courtiers to sacrifice while recusants were flogged[2]; all troops likewise were commanded to sacrifice, those refusing to be discharged. Whether Galerius was originally stirred by his superstitious mother, one may doubt; he needed no stimulus from without. Regent and sub-regent conferred much at Nicomedia during that winter. Diocletian, however, first consulted the oracle of Apollo near Miletus and then only gave in to his son-in-law, insisting, however, that there should be no executions, while every form of urging and distress might be brought into play.

Large churches, says Eusebius (VIII, 1), had in all the cities taken the place of the humble chapels of an earlier time. But insincerity and hypocrisy had been coming in with this greater prosperity[3], also envy and backbiting and contentions, a quasi-internecine war of ecclesiastics, in fact, congregation rising against congregation. Eusebius even calls the persecution a divine judgment[4]. Suddenly then came the edict of Nicomedia of February 23, 303 A.D.[5]; churches were to be destroyed, the Christian Scriptures to be burned, the ecclesiastic leaders to be taken in hand. There is a curious and most significant item in Lactantius[6]; after breaking open the church at Nicomedia, *the officials of Diocletian looked for a cult-figure of—God*. They could

[1] Eusebius, VII, 32. [2] Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, 10.

[3] Ἐπὶ χαυνότητα καὶ νωθρίαν τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς μετηλλάττετο (VIII, 1).

[4] Θείαν κρίσιν (*loc. cit.*).

[5] The *Terminalia* of the Roman calendar (Lactantius, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, 12).

[6] "Simulacrum Dei quaeritur" (*loc. cit.* 12).

not conceive any worship without a *simulacrum*. The praetorians razed the church before the day was done. The edict provided that no Christian in the Roman Empire should hold any office or public honour, that torture should be applied, that all civic satisfaction or protection of courts should be denied them, and that Christian domestics be enslaved if they remained Christian.

A second edict decreed that all ecclesiastics should first be imprisoned and later be forced to sacrifice. A Christian tore down a copy of the edict in Nicomedia, adding that it meant victories for Goths and Sarmatians. He was roasted to death in a slow fire. Diocletian compelled his own Empress, Prisca (if Lactantius, *loc. cit.* 15, is right), to sacrifice, as well as his daughter Valeria. Soon all prisons were filled to overflowing with bishops, presbyters, deacons, exorcists. Altars were set up in the very courts, that all litigants first had to qualify as pagans by some act of conformity. Constantius in Britain and Gaul limited his action to the destruction of chapels. Hierocles had much to do with the origin of the persecution. His successor as *vicarius* Priscillianus was subjected to torture nine times but did not yield. When Galerius succeeded as Augustus and Diocletian retired to Salonae, the persecutions became more cruel and severe (*loc. cit.* 21); wild beasts and the stake were much used, for the personal gratification of that Emperor, says Lactantius. The bones of the martyrs were ground to powder and thrown into rivers or the sea, that their tombs might not be honoured by the Christians[1]. The profession of pleaders suffered severely[2].

[1] Eusebius, VIII, 6.

[2] Lactantius, *loc. cit.* 22: "Eloquentia extincta, causidici sublati, iure consulti aut relegati aut necati. Literae autem inter malas artes habitae."

Numberless, says Eusebius (VIII, 3), were those who weakened under the first assault from cowardice. There were many officials who strove to obey the edict without going to extremes[1], and connived whenever they could. The provinces particularly visited by this persecution were Africa, Mauretania, the Thebaid, and Egypt proper. The personal observations of Eusebius, of course, were largely made in Palestine. At Tyre flogging was followed by wild beasts such as panthers, various kinds of bears and wild boars, or steers goaded by steel and fire, the martyrs often striving to hasten their own end by shaking their hands at the brutes (Eusebius, VIII, 7), as they were advised to do. Some were impaled and so perished of hunger.

We owe to Eusebius the preservation of the record drawn up by Phileas, Bishop of Thmuis in the Thebaid. He says: First there was flogging with various instruments, followed by other tortures, such as drawing the sufferer up by a cord tied to a single hand, which had to sustain the weight of the entire body, racking every joint and tendon. These things were inflicted on each one examined by the Roman Governor, as soon as the defendant refused to deny his faith. Sub-officials sat by each sufferer to watch if he should make some sign of surrender or seem to give in. If they survived this—many expired during the tortures or soon after—and still persisted, they were led away to execution. It was considered sufficient recantation if the delinquent merely touched the pagan sacrifice. Anthimos, Bishop of Nicomedia, was beheaded. Other martyrs were Tyrannion, Bishop of Tyre, Zenobios, a presbyter at Sidon,

1 "Nihil aliud devitant, quam ut ne torti moriantur" (Lactantius, *Instit.* V, 11; Eusebius, VIII, 3).

Silvanus, Bishop of Emesa. Notable among the victims was Eusebius' friend and host, Pamphilus, Bishop of Caesarea. I cannot reproduce here the detail furnished by the church historian. We may sum up the whole matter by a phrase repeatedly used by Eusebius (*e.g.* VIII, 13): "The war waged against us by the Roman government"—"a war without a truce[1]."

The further story of the various regents and sub-regents, their rise and fall, their schemes, combinations and wars, finally ending in the restoration of monarchy by Constantine, and his chiefly political act of freeing and then officially establishing Christianity with all the potential dangers of state support and state control—this is no part of these studies and their general theme. But I should append the edict of the wretched Galerius cancelling the edicts of persecution, issued by him when he was dying of a loathsome and incurable disease. We have this edict in a Greek and in a Latin form; was it not most likely bilingual when issued? Lactantius omits the formal preamble and titles:

The Imperator Caesar *Galerius* Valerius Maximinus, invincible, Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, Germanicus maximus, Aegyptiacus maximus, Thebaicus maximus, Sarmaticus maximus five times, supreme victor over the Persians, twice greatest over the Carpi, six times greatest over the Armenians, greatest over the Medes, greatest over the Adiabenians, twenty times endowed with the Tribunician power, nineteen times Imperator, Consul eight times, Pater Patriae, Proconsul; and the Imperator Flavius Valerius *Constantinus*, Pius, Felix, Invincible, Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, with Tribunician power, [hailed as] Imperator for the fifth time, Consul, Pater Patriae, Proconsul; and the Imperator, Caesar, Valerius *Licinius* Pius, Felix, Invincible, Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, holding the Tribunician power for the fourth time, [hailed as] Imperator for the third time,

[1] Πόλεμον ἄσπονδον ἐγείρουσιν (VIII, 13).

Consul, Pater Patriae, Proconsul: To their own (several) provincials[1], greeting.

Amid the other things which we are always disposing for the utility and advantage of the people, we have desired hitherto to reform everything[2] in accordance with the ancient laws and the governmental tradition of the Romans, and to take forethought for this, that the Christians also, who have abandoned the sect of their own parents, should return to sound sentiments, since indeed through some mental process or other, so great a presumption had possessed them, and folly had seized upon them, that they did not follow the things pointed out by the men of old, which perhaps formerly even their own sires had established, but in accordance with their own design and as each one had the mood, so, too, to make laws for themselves, and to observe these, and gather together different bodies[3] in different places. Finally, when such an edict had gone forth from us, that they should once more turn themselves[4] to the usages of the ancients, very many, having been subjected to danger and very many having been confounded, suffered all kinds of death[5], and when, as the majority persisted in the same madness [*ἀπονοίᾳ*], we saw that they were neither offering to the celestial gods due worship, nor paying attention to the God of the Christians, taking into view our own gentleness and the consistent habit through which we were accustomed to bestow pardon upon all men, we thought most eagerly that in this matter, too, we should extend our permission, to wit, that they may be Christians once more and may erect their houses in which they used to meet, provided that they do nothing contrary to knowledge[6]. And through another letter we shall make clear to the judges what they must observe. Hence, in accordance with this indulgence of ours, they ought to invoke their own God for the restoration of our welfare and that of the government and their own, in order that public affairs be

[1] Or subjects, *ἐπαρχιώταις* (Eusebius, VIII, 17).

[2] I follow Lactantius here, *cuncta*. Eusebius has *ἅπαντας*, all men.

[3] Neander takes this as meaning a multitude of sects. Mosheim: Had become split into various sects and parties, differing in opinion and practice. Eusebius: Πλήθη. Lactantius: *Populos*.

[4] *μεταστήσαιεν*, *se converterent*.

[5] There is a curious lacuna here in Lactantius.

[6] Ἐπιστήμη, *disciplina* (vague).

rendered sound in every way and they may unconcernedly dwell at their own hearth.

This edict was issued at Nicomedia on April 30, 311 A.D. Galerius expired a few days afterward. The prisons were opened.

Edward Gibbon has written about this persecution with curious bias. As the world does not generally examine his and our sources, but trusts and reads and quotes him instead, we must not, as simple students of the events even, lose sight of the fact that it must have been his design here to disparage the Christians and their leaders. "Superstition" and "Reason," faculties of intelligence alone, constituted for the Voltairian all the needed factors or elements that can come into play in the actual history of any given religion, inclusive of the Christian, or in any estimate or valuation of the same. An authority wholly unwarranted often seems, like incense, to arise from his pompously positive and symmetrical periods, prejudicing and luring his readers to assume his own sympathies and antipathies. He cites in extenuation of Galerius, the persecutions in the period of the Reformation, by the Guises in France or by Alva in the Netherlands. For Galerius he computes "*an annual output* of one hundred and fifty martyrs"; the intended sneer is in the phrase, and is firmly lodged there. I append no exegesis, but I commend the phrase to the reflections of any thoughtful reader.

Eusebius does not at all "indirectly" (or directly) confess "that he has related whatever might redound to the glory, and that he has suppressed all that could tend to the disgrace, of religion." We saw above with what sorrow and bitterness the ecclesiastic of Caesarea spoke of the grave deterioration and the many evils

which (before the edict of Nicomedia) had come to be rife in the Christian church, and said that he, Eusebius, viewed the persecution as "*a divine judgment*" (VIII, 1). Gibbon therefore wrote of the ecclesiastic historian not merely what was unfair, but what was simply much worse, namely, untrue.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EMPEROR JULIAN AND HIS RELIGION

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Much has been written on this puzzling theme. Classicists always have been interested in the meteoric flight of one who sought to rehabilitate "Hellenism," *his* Hellenism, while theologians, historians, philosophers, approach his personality with varying questions and forms of interest. It would be futile, however, to enumerate or weigh the estimates of the Apostate, from his fellow-student at Athens, Gregory of Nazianzus, down to Harnack and Miss Gardner. With my own limitations of space, I must more than ever adhere to my favourite manner of gaining as much light as may be from the recorded utterances of the chief figure, Julian himself, who became feverishly and demonstratively productive as soon as he could safely do so. Much illumination also comes from his friend and literary model, Libanius, the orator and publicist ("sophist") of Antioch. Eunapius tells us of theurgy, or art of "working the gods," of Julian's influential adviser Maximus. As this chapter must deal mainly with Julian's religious and mantic experiences, so-called, and his short-lived though fervid efforts to spiritualize and to restore the paganism of the past, we cannot bring in Ammianus as much as we would like to. Neander is fair and aided here by a faculty of delicate psychological insight. The study of Libanius by the late Dr G. R. Sievers of Hamburg (Berlin, 1868) is as yet without any rival in this field, not even if we think of Gibbon. That famous historian is not a very good guide in the domain of spiritual problems, and he is, I believe, not much more friendly at heart to the "Galileans" than to that cult which dreamed of a palingenesis of the gods of Homer and Hesiod. Professor Gildersleeve's essay (in his *Essays and Studies*) is worthy of attentive perusal, though the work of his earlier manhood; the admirable index appended to Hertlein's Greek text of Julian (Teubner, 1875) deserves our warmest recognition.

WAS there any genuine, let alone Christian, religiosity in, or anywhere within the dynastic striving of Constantine, called the Great? The attestation by courtier bishops cannot mean much to us. Why did he postpone his baptism to close before his death? The state church as then constituted, I fear, was a mongrel thing or liable to become so at any time.

When the man who had made a new Rome on the Bosporus died, near Nicomedia[1], May 22, 337 A.D., his dynasty indeed seemed strongly established, with three sons, Constantinus, Constantius, Constans, left co-regents (*Augusti*) in the will. But early in 338 the half-brothers of the deceased Emperor, Delmatius and Julius Constantius, were slain, as things were officially put, by or in a mutiny of soldiers, but really, it would seem, through connivance or design of Constantius himself[2] (advised probably by his camarilla of eunuchs) with six cousins of that young Augustus, and another, Julian's oldest brother. Constantius, although repeatedly married, never had children of his own.

At once Julian and his brother Gallus, sons of the slain prince, Julius Constantius, were placed at Macellum, in Cappadocia[3], in the strictest seclusion, building a monument, jointly, to the martyr Mamas; to be a *praelector* in divine service he was pretty young. Sozomenos says they had a princely environment and

[1] Socrates (*Historia Ecclesiastica*, I, 39) explains how his baptism was distinctly occasioned by the prospect of his approaching dissolution. His testament was prepared after the baptism.

[2] So Julian himself, *Ad Senatum Populumque Atheniensium*, 270 C.

[3] *Loc. cit.* 271 B, p. 349, Hertlein. Immediatel yafter the catastrophe, and in consequence of the same, so also in Sozomenos, *H. E.* V, 2. We feel, of course, that Sozomenos and Socrates deal as gently as possible with Constantius and his memory.

all the educational opportunities suitable for their age; he specifies, however, only religious instruction. Julian himself said, later on[1], it being a period of six years, that he was a very young lad (κομιδῇ μειράκιον), shut off from all contact with real friends or old acquaintances, secluded from all serious study, and compelled to associate with slaves mainly. There is much confusion about the chronology of this bitter sojourn at Macellum.

His regular course under *grammaticus* and *rhetor* must have followed upon that enforced stay at Macellum, and the question, "Who killed my father and kindred?" evidently would not down in the mind of the lively and gifted child. But we must briefly survey the history of his imperial cousins. In 340 Constantine II was slain by his own soldiers, near Aquileia, while marching on his brother Constans. This Augustus (in November, 342) forbade all pagan worship in Italy, while guaranteeing the physical integrity of such temples as stood outside of city walls and served really as monuments of Roman history. This same Constans was slain in Gaul, in 350, by the usurper Magnentius, who thereafter for a while ruled all the north-west, Italy itself, and the province called Africa. But he was defeated by Constantius at Mursa in lower Pannonia in 351. Two years later he succumbed to the eagles of Constantine's only surviving heir in a battle near the Cottian Alps, after which the tyrant fled to Lyons, where he slew his own mother, his brother, and finally himself.

For the first time in sixteen years the vast empire, in 353, once more was under a single head. Constantius, childless then and a widower, married the gifted lady

[1] *Ad Senatum Populumque Atheniensium.*

Eusebia of Thessalonica. But he remained childless and, besides, the frontiers at Rhine and Danube were not well maintained. In all dynastic and domestic issues, this Emperor seems to have been guided sometimes indeed by his wise consort, but more often it would seem by a camarilla of eunuchs rather than by any advisers worthy of the name of statesmen. Favouritism ran wild at the seat of government in Constantinople, and bribery and extortion flourished as rarely before. And for the official religion of such a kinsman, Julian could not entertain a very favourable prejudice or genuine respect, although his future, nay his very existence, depended on the good will or toleration of Constantius.

Let us set down now what is traceable of Julian's education and spiritual influences from his boyhood to his twentieth year[1] (say from 344–350) when, as he himself says, he became a secret convert to the "manifest gods" of paganism. Of course, every stage and step in his education from his father's execution in 338 to his own inner crisis in 350–51 was regulated by his imperial cousin and sovereign. After Macellum then, say from 344 to 350, from his fourteenth to his twentieth year or so, Julian was educated in his native city of Constantinople, and the stock and substance of that training was the study of the great classics of the Hellenic past. Of course, the Greeks furnished his mind, nay determined his very mentality in a very much greater degree than the Latins, whom in his extant writings he never cites by name. Homer particularly figured there, and his paedagogus, Mardonios (who

[1] Julian writing to people of Alexandria, *Epistola*, 51, in 362 (*i.e.* referring to 350 or so).

escorted him to and from instruction), accustomed him to take Homeric ideals very seriously indeed, besides inculcating self-control and a certain humility[1]. He never entered a theatre until he began to shave. The precarious situation of the orphan lad must have suggested to those who were directly entrusted with his education, to have him avoid all display as a kinsman of the Emperor and as being in line of succession.

The Men of Old[2], their sayings and lives, sank deep into his eager and active mind, and all patterns, exemplars, precedents, were sought (and found) in that quarter. With all his policy of self-effacement, his reputation seems to have stirred the camarilla of the Emperor, and when the latter, in 350, set out against Magnentius, he directed that Julian, then nineteen or twenty, should not remain behind[3] in Constantinople, but reside at Nicomedia. In this town was then teaching the orator and publicist, Libanius of Antioch (famous according to the prevailing taste), master of a profession in which the oratory of display (mainly tinkling cymbals to us now) dealt with current issues of the day, and in which classic citation and allusion were almost as substantial an element as in the Humanists a thousand years later on. In these years (350–51) Julian moulted in his own way, and rid himself of what Christian influences he might have had, a cult which began to run excessively toward martyr-veneration. As

[1] *Misopogon*, 351 A.

[2] *Ep.* 19, to Hekebolios, his former rhetor: Οἱ παλαιοὶ ἄνδρες. Cf. Libanius, *Oratio*, 18, p. 525. Libanius was then at Constantinople, but not permitted to teach the prince. *Or.* 18, p. 526.

[3] Socrates (*H. E.* III, 1) says directly that Julian's fine gifts attracted attention to him as to one qualified some day to rule the Empire.

for the young prince, we may confidently say that his spiritual experiences were slender or nil, while all his ideals had been found elsewhere.

At Nicomedia, then, while the authorities at Constantinople had warned him against taking lessons from Libanius, whose "Hellenism" was undisguised, the prince privately acquired written discourses of the famous "Sophist." That profession then actually overtopped grammaticus and rhetor; the "Sophist" indeed was a veritable mouthpiece of the times and had the ear of his generation. About this time, Julian's brother Gallus was made "Caesar," or subregent, largely for the East. That it was in Nicomedia only (350–51) that Julian became acquainted with Neoplatonism is not probable, but we assume that he now sought through it or gained those convictions or aspirations which led to his pagan conversion. His own brother, Gallus, the new Caesar, would have been the first to arrest him had this become notorious. "Philosophy," or the throne, began to loom up before the vision of the imperial enthusiast, or, a combination of the two. We know[1] that the Emperor Marcus Aurelius became his ideal much more than Caesar or Alexander the Great. He came into close relation with "those men who were loaded with Plato [τοῖς τοῦ Πλάτωνος γέμουσιν (Libanius, XVIII, 18)]" and from these (as expounders of Plato's *Timaeus*) he heard "about the gods and lower sprites [δαίμονες], and those that really have both made and are preserving this universe, and what the soul is and whence it comes and whither it goes." Libanius, in reporting all this soon drifts into the actual text of Plato's *Phaedrus*, the gospel of that cult.

[1] From his *Convivium Caesarum*.

The main point for our present study is this: That Julian "cast out all the former nonsense [*πάντα τὸν ἔμπροσθεν ἐκβαλὼν ὕθλον* (Libanius, XVIII)] and introduced into his soul the comeliness of truth, like cult-figures [*agalmata*] of gods formerly insulted with mud, into some great temple[1]"—not a bad specimen of the grandiose manner of the Antiochene publicist. Outwardly and publicly the Emperor's cousin studied rhetoric.

To Nicomedia, too, there came a man summoned thither through very private channels, a man reputed a veritable hierophant among the old believers, and held to be pre-eminently fitted to initiate so rare a neophyte as Julian, Maximus of Ephesus. His mantic and theurgic powers are thus described by his fellow-believer, Eunapius[2]. It was in a temple of Hecate (so Aidesios reported to Julian) and at night. Maximus, operating as *theurge* before the cult-figure, consecrated a bit of incense, while mumbling to himself some religious poetry. He reached such a point in his display that first the cult-figure actually *smiled* (cf. Lourdes) and later she actually *laughed*, and finally the torches held by the goddess were automatically kindled.

This, according to Eunapius, was a report made to Julian in 353, and that prince was henceforth insatiable in acquiring this lore from this same Maximus and from a similar Neoplatonic "god-worker," Chrysanthius. Of

[1] "Opposition to Christianity as such, no matter in what form, has its source deep in the human heart; and the deeper the heart, the more earnest the nature, the farther down we must sink the shaft of our investigation. Julian was a thorough Greek in his pride; and the doctrine of the cross could never have been other than foolishness to him" (Gildersleeve, *Essays and Studies*, 1890, p. 368).

[2] *Vitae Sophistarum*, 1849, Didot, p. 475.

course, all remained occult as yet. It is this then, which the fervid classicist gained and prized, in exchange for a form of Christianity, which as set over against the "Hellenism" of his growing culture, had become for him a mean and meaningless thing. From that time till his premature death, Julian with the entire school of Iamblichus, believed that[1] the worshipper could put himself (through the *agalmata*) into relation with the intelligible gods[2]. The magic rites effective for this end were of course known only to a small number.

How Julian's accession to this cult became known to Hellenists elsewhere I cannot explain; it would have been a serious thing for Julian had Constantius and his camarilla heard of it. The church historian Socrates (III, 1) indeed says that the news reached the Emperor, but that Julian by tonsure and other monkish habits, acting also as reader in the cathedral at Nicomedia, allayed the Emperor's suspicions. Libanius says (*Or.* 18, 20): "As the rumour was carried everywhere, all those [professionally, I dare say] concerned with the *Muses and the other gods* partly travelled by land and partly by sea, being eager both to see him and to come into his company, and to say something themselves and to hear him speaking." They were all scholars in the only domain of literary scholarship then available. "All the well-minded," as Libanius puts it, "prayed that the youth might become master of affairs and halt the destruction of the civilized world [check the barbarians] and heal those who were ill [the Christians]." We may

[1] Libanius is reminded of the Θειασμός of Nikias, as reported by Thucydides, VII, 50.

[2] "The stories of the magic rites into which Julian plunged so eagerly have little interest except as so many illustrations the more of the utter desperateness of the old religion" (Gildersleeve).

assume that the common and universal interests of all culture and education, Hellenism in itself, proved a safe lid for the occultism of this Neoplatonic idolatry.

Gallus ruled but three years as Caesar in *Oriens*. His savage cruelty in suppressing disorders in Palestine and at Antioch (352) and the fact that Constantius (353) married once more, seem to have determined the camarilla[1] to have him executed on an island off the coast of Istria, while being conveyed to Italy (354). Still the Emperor himself, who remained childless, was in a way emphasizing his own dynastic isolation. Julian was dragged about in different places for seven months[2] and kept under the closest surveillance, and his every act or speech had to be more circumspect than ever. He regained his freedom of movement through the intercession of the Empress Eusebia. He then, for the first time in his life, visited Athens, "the eye of the Hellenic world," as Libanius called it, "the mother of Plato and Demosthenes." He taught more there than he learned, says Libanius, being always the centre of admiring swarms of younger and older men, philosophers and rhetoricians. Still he blushed readily, and reserve and taciturnity were not in his character[3].

It was again through Eusebia that he was summoned from Athens to Milan, endowed with the purple as Caesar, married to the Emperor's sister, Helena, late in 355, and sent to Gaul to secure the Rhine frontier against Franks and Alemanni. In his management of

[1] Julian himself (*Ad S. P. A.* 272) later on complained that there was no trial at all, but intimates that Constantius in this cruel verdict gratified his eunuch chamberlain.

[2] *Loc. cit.* 273 A.

[3] "Linguae fusioris et admodum raro silentis" (*Ammianus*, XXV, 4, 17).

war, more and more there came a turn in the tide of invasion which long had been running from East to West. At last (in 360), his legions proclaimed him Augustus at Paris, much against his will, he claimed[1]. We must content ourselves here with the briefest summary of secular history. Constantius in the following winter made his headquarters at Antioch. When Julian, in the summer of 361, moved through Hungary and Serbia towards the Dardanelles and Bosporus, the world of course expected a decisive battle between the two Augusti, but Constantius died at Mopsucrene in Cilicia on November 3, 361[2], and there was none left to dispute with the young Hellenist the diadem of universal empire. Julian, in fact, entered Constantinople on December 3, 361, having been spared, as he himself expressed it at the time[3], the necessity of either "suffering or inflicting the irremediable things." His consort Helena had died the year before.

The feverish activity of this extraordinary character, from December, 361, until March, 363 (when he began his fatal invasion of Persia) may well remind one of Alexander, Caesar or Napoleon. A few things preceded this period. Such were his two panegyrics on his cousin Constantius, respectful and reverential, written in Gaul by a philosopher-prince who was a secret pagan and knew himself to be surrounded in his own court by spies of Constantius and his eunuchs. Insincere[4] is the strain of both discourses. One sees the pupil of Libanius

[1] But his eulogist, Ammianus, more than twenty years later, wrote thus: "Accedebat autem, incendebatque eius cupiditatem, pacatis iam Galliis, *incessere ultro Constantium*" (21, 1, 6).

[2] Socrates, *H. E.* II, 46.

[3] In a letter to his Uncle Julian (*Ep.* 13).

[4] Particularly heavy flattery in 45 C, 46 D. Cf. *Or.* III, 114 C.

at work, the Atticist and classicist is everywhere in evidence, and little tricks of style are everywhere recurrent. Much of its we now would call sophomoric; he drags in Pheidias, Praxiteles, Alexander, Ajax, Hector, Sarpedon, Plato (Homer and the Attic philosopher furnishing him his favourite reading always)—the supermen of old and their apotheoses. The aim was to keep the Emperor in good humour, which then was the most important concern of Julian's existence. It is fair to say, on the other hand, that in these panegyrics we meet not a trace of distinctly Christian sentiment or vestige of ecclesiastic conformity or allusion. This holds good also for his panegyric to his protectress and benefactress, the Empress Eusebia, where Penelope does the heaviest service. Incidentally (he was ethnically a Thracian) he calls Hellas his real fatherland.

Eusebia's barrenness, by the bye, proved a matter of great weight in Julian's ultimate ambitions, for he was the last representative of the dynasty of Constantine. All men knew it[1]. Now before Julian assumed the purple and diadem in Paris (360) he and his friends "asked the god to give a sign[2]," viz. whether he should accept the acclamation of his troops or not. This keeping himself *en rapport* (with "the more powerful ones") had been and now more than ever became the chief concern of his life and short reign, and so, too, Libanius[3] says of him: "For he knew—having heard from the

[1] Socrates (*H. E.* III, 1) urges that Constantius hardly would have made Julian Caesar and given him armies in Gaul, if his ultimate design was to destroy Julian. When the breach finally came, who was to blame?

[2] By theurgy or Θειασμός: Ἠτέομεν τὸν Θεὸν δοῦναι τέρας (*Ad S. P. A.* 284 A).

[3] *Epitaphios*, 105.

gods—what was going to happen," and adds that "Greece" (Hellenism) now (before the death of Constantius) revolted from the latter and "eagerly clutched the emergency [of Julian's accession to supreme power] *which it had been begging from the gods in silence and without altars, for they were not.*" In Athens, Julian opened the Parthenon and the temples of the other gods and honoured them with sacred gifts and sacrificed in person and called upon the others to do so. Athens indeed (and Rome) were citadels of the ancient superstitions. Constantius was buried by Julian with the fullest measure of dynastic and official pomp. Julian indeed abstained from Hellenizing any one against his will[1], but he used his power of appointment and dismissal with a free hand.

The history of the Christian church had certainly demonstrated this, that in religion cruelty can never persuade, but that "even if the hand sacrifices, the mind censures the hand" (*ibid.*). He tried with great earnestness to bring the Christians to understand "the powers which truly hold the heavens [*τῶν ἀληθῶς τὸν οὐρανον ἐχόντων* (*op. cit.* 125)]" and to cure them of their veneration for the "man of Palestine." By imperial edicts swiftly carried everywhere pagan temples and worship were restored; some of the edifices were entirely rebuilt, others refitted, into others cult-figures were brought once more. Those persons who had appropriated stones of temples as building material for their own houses had to make reparation; columns taken from despoiled temples were conveyed back to the same by land and sea, "and everywhere altars and fire and blood and the savour of sacrifice and smoke, and rites of initiation

[1] Libanius, *op. cit.* 122.

and soothsayers free from fear, and on the peaks of mountains flutes and processions and an ox sufficient at once to be a service to the gods and a feast for men[1]." Julian caused to be erected for his daily devotions a pagan chapel within the precincts of the imperial palace at Constantinople, the service to be for the god "who leads the day." His very first task after leaving his simple and ascetic couch was always to sacrifice, and thereby "to associate with the more powerful Beings [ἀεὶ συγγενέσθαι διὰ θυσιῶν τοῖς κρείττοσιν]."

In hierophantic and theurgic lore, Maximus had been for some ten years his great authority and practical adviser; Julian betrayed this deeper relation thus. He was in a session of the Senate at Constantinople, and was himself in the middle of an address to that august body, when "a philosopher from Ionia" was announced. Him the Emperor embraced before them all with a royal reception[2], then made an address before the great council, saying what he had been before and what he had become[3] and that all this blessed change was due to Maximus then present before them, and then Julian withdrew, escorting the "philosopher" by his right hand, like a brother[4].

Only genuine and convinced Hellenists were to teach letters henceforth. This famous edict[5] of June, 362, has been the object of endless discussion, and varied inter-

[1] Libanius, *op. cit.* 126.

[2] Libanius, 156.

[3] Οἷος ἐξ οἵου δι' ἐκεῖνον γένοιτο.

[4] Ammianus (XXII, 7, 3) perhaps betrays the jealousy of the military class—jealousy of this excess of imperial favour. Ammianus reports it thus: Julian actually jumped up, ran as hard as he could (*effuso cursu*) far out beyond the entrance to the *curia*, in a manner which Ammianus designates as unseemly and as oblivious of the Emperor's own self-respect.

[5] Libanius, *op. cit.* XVIII, 158.

pretation. I for my part would beg to suggest that it may have been, in part, his desire to rehabilitate many classical teachers of pagan convictions or affinities; at all events, it was a measure highly germane to his classicist and pagan propaganda. He claimed[1] that a Hellenist could not teach effectively unless he was sincerely attached to the contents of these classics and could expound them with genuine conviction and sympathy, whether he followed the profession of *grammaticus* or *rhetor* or the highest of them, the "Sophist" so-called. Julian claimed, with infinite naïveté, that not only Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus[2], but also Demosthenes, Thucydides (*sic*), Isocrates, Lysias, had held the gods of old as essential elements of the culture which they produced in, or by means of, their works[3], and considered themselves consecrated to Hermes and the Muses. It would not do for the expounders of those classics to dishonour the gods honoured by these same classics. That would be incongruous and absurd. Christian teachers must not make a living from a culture which at bottom they reject. No Hellenist teacher of letters henceforth need any further to suppress or conceal his real religious convictions. The others, if they like, may go into the churches of the Galileans to expound Matthew and Luke. Have a regeneration, then (a sneering allusion to John iii, 3), for your eyes and ears from the pagan classics, ye Christian teachers. Christian pupils, however, may attend the pagan classicist without abandoning the Christian religion.

[1] *Ep.* 42.

[2] Of these cf. E. G. Sihler, *Testimonium Animae*, New York, 1908, and Botsford and Sihler, *Hellenic Civilization*, Columbia University Press, 1915.

[3] P. 423, Reiske.

Julian wrote, or rather dictated to his shorthand secretaries (*notarii*), with intense enthusiasm and incredible speed[1], early in 362, a "discourse" (in the Libanian manner) on the Sun and on the Great Mother of Pessinūs. These publications were a kind of confession of faith, a manifesto for his own generation, in which a sort of religion is interfused with a kind of philosophy in the true manner of the Neoplatonists of the School of Iamblichus. We must, in fairness, examine these discourses with some care. The Sun, now King Helios, had been to Julian from childhood an object of great interest[2]. His child's yearning was for the power to look at it without flinching, also he rapturously admired the stars on a clear night. Now the Sun is really the bestower of life and the maintainer of it on our earth—we owe everything to him. Also does he bestow sight on those who see, and visibility on those things which are seen, and in all these forms of beneficence the sun is but a material manifestation of the corresponding Intelligible Being, which existed before and which in turn is an emanation from the Eternal and uncreated One. "Is not the entire universe a unit[3], animate and throughout full of soul and intelligence, something perfect, of perfect parts?"

It is this Being (the Ideal Sun) which blesses this material world of ours, ordering and illumining everything and "furnishing the uncreated cause for phenomena [*τὴν ἀγέννητον αἰτίαν τῶν γενομένων παρέχων* (*op. cit.* 142 B)]" and all this while of the Christian educa-

[1] *Oratio* IV was done "in three nights." (Hertlein's text, 157 C.) Socrates, *H. E.* III, 1: *Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ διανυκτερεύων λόγους συνέγραψε*, and displayed them by reading them out before the Senate.

[2] Hertlein's text, 130 C.

[3] *Op. cit.* 139 B.

tion of his childhood and early youth he spoke with condescension and in a haughty spirit, "let there be oblivion for that darkness! [λήθη δὲ ἔστω τοῦ σκότους ἐκείνου (*op. cit.* 131 A)]." Pre-incarnation dominates the fate and career of men's souls; the choice of life in that pre-natal stage being the right and lofty one for angels, *daimones*, supermen, and all those concrete individual souls that abide in the truth of the Exemplar and Idea (Plato's *Phaedrus*), "never yielding themselves to the body" (*op. cit.* 145 C). We must always reason backward from our phenomenal world to the world of the non-phenomenal verities, which assigned to our Helios his central and thus ineffably beneficent position, and the guardianship of the planets. One must not look at the heavens as dumb cattle do[1] (as the Christians do, he meant), but so as to recognize with open mind the divinities there palpably active.

The Sun, then, is surrounded by "the manifest deities" and those on the fringe of the Kosmos[2] and one must conceive aright of the immaterial and intelligible ones, who are about the Good, the intelligible and divine substance multiplying itself without suffering any influence from without (ἀπαθῶς) and without any increment from without[3]. *One* is the supreme creator-god, or *demiurge*[4] of the universe; "many are the creative deities that move about in the heavens." The cult-figures symbolize these cosmic truths and dependencies and so mediate the worship of those under-gods whom they represent to the worshipper[5]. As to the ascent of

[1] Ὥσπερ τὰ βοσκήματα (Hertlein's text, 148 C).
[2] *Op. cit.* 138 C.
[3] Ἄνευ προσθήκης (*op. cit.* 139 A).
[4] *Op. cit.* 140 D.
[5] The philosophy of Iamblichus, Maximus, Priscus, etc., and the precise point when this last stage of Greek thought dove-tailed with the idolatry of the past.

souls (after death) it is more a matter of faith than a possible object of demonstration[1]. The functions and benefactions of Apollo are enumerated[2]. The deeper interpretation of the popular or traditional myths and legends is a duty and privilege of the initiated, among whom the younger Iamblichus, his Iamblichus, held so high a rank, whose writings (dealing in this allegorical lore) were to the imperial Neoplatonist "the consummation of human wisdom [τὸ τέλος τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας (*op. cit.* 157 C)]." Helios (quite different from Homer's system) is really the Olympian Zeus and the Egyptian Sarapis as well[3]. Julian seems to have re-established for Rome (which city he never saw himself) for a year or so (362) the celebration of Aurelian's *Sol Invictus* (Mithras), due immediately after the Saturnalia.

Julian ends this treatise, thirty-eight pages of modern print, done in three nights, with a prayer:

> I pray then,...that, for this eagerness of mine, Helios, King of the Universe, may become gracious unto me, and grant me a good life and more consummate understanding and a divine mind and a very gentle fated departure from this life at the proper time, and ascent to him hereafter, and a sojourn with him, if possible an eternal one, but if this be greater than my life-achievements [are worth], very many re-passages [of soul] and of many years.

Plato's *Phaedrus* had become a religious book and an authority of revelation.

In his discourse on the Great Mother of Phrygian Pessinūs, the allegorical lore of his peculiar sect and cult runs fairly riot. Attis, the one beloved of the *Magna Mater*, Attis, who emasculated himself, what is he? Or better, what does he symbolize? This Oriental figment

[1] Hertlein's text, 152 B.
[2] *Op. cit.* 152 D.
[3] *Op. cit.* 136 A.

is pressed into the Platonic mould; he is the immaterial essence of creative intelligence[1]. To be competent to perceive this, we must purge the soul. Attis belongs to the category of First Causes[2], while the Great Mother (the physical universe) has but a dispassionate love for Attis, *i.e.* an affinity for the causes of material forms. The *Galli* (the self-emasculated priests of Cybele) are connected with the *galaxy*! We are by our primary essence heavenly, have been carried to earth, but must return to the One. All this, Julian feels, is not good material for popular propaganda, for it is cryptic wisdom (theosophy, we say now), not to be understood by the rabble, "but known to the blessed practitioners of theurgy[3]." Julian actually expresses his obligation to the Great Mother for his mental illumination and because she did not let him wander in darkness[4].

Julian is aware that he repeats himself much in this discourse, but then he tells us, that it was done offhand, by a sudden impulse, that he "stitched it together without catching his breath[5]," without any preliminary reading or research; the very theme had not been definitely before his mind, when he asked for his writing tablets. The concluding prayer is again significant:

> Grant to all men happiness, of which the chief element is the understanding of the gods and jointly [grant] to the Roman people [*i.e.* to all of his subjects] *especially to rub out the blot of ungodliness* and in addition [grant] the gracious fortune, jointly piloting for it its empire for many thousand years, and that to me there may come [as] the fruit of my worship of thee, truth in the doctrines [δόγμασιν] concerning the gods, *consummation in theurgy*, and in all measures in which we approach political

[1] The λόγος σπερματικός of the Stoic system.
[2] *Op. cit.* 163 D.
[3] Such as Maximus: Θεουργοῖς δὲ τοῖς μακαρίοις γνώριμα.
[4] *Op. cit.* 174 C.
[5] *Op. cit.* 178 D.

and military arrangements, excellence coupled with good fortune, and a termination of life both painless and well-approved, with the good hope connected with the passage to you.

As to Julian's Maximian and Iamblichian lore of theurgy, Libanius—to whom his enthusiastic imperial friend told everything—told him in turn (*Or.* XV, 25): "You are a kind of Greek [Ἕλλην τις] and you rule over Greeks." "You are a great scholar in the hidden meanings [τὰ ἀπόρρητα]" of Homer. "The Olympians who dwelt with you [29]..., they even roused you when you slept, touching you with their hands, and advised you as to impending contingencies of military movements; you alone have seen their shapes, [you a] blissful spectator of the blissful, you alone heard the voice of the gods, discerning now that of Athena, now that of Zeus, Apollo, Hercules, Pan" (30). Julian, *e.g.*, had asked the gods whether Antioch would be spared civil disturbances up to the beginning of summer (72).

Now Julian, in the last winter of his short life (362–363), carried his propaganda against the Christians to the point of writing and publishing a treatise against them, a polemic against which Cyrillus of Alexandria wrote in rebuttal[1]. In religion, Julian says, there are three groups: Hellenes, Jews, Galileans. These latter got their godlessness from the Jews[2]. It is sheer obstinacy not to recognize the Sun as a god, for it is moved from eternity by a divine soul dwelling in it. As to Genesis, How could God create man, when he foreknew his fall? The serpent really was a benefactor in leading to knowledge. Comparing Plato's *Timaeus* with Genesis[3], Julian finds that the Mosaic

[1] Julian's points have been carefully extracted and edited by C. J. Neumann, Leipzig, 1880, to whom I stand in obligation.

[2] Neumann, p. 164. [3] As Celsus did two hundred years before.

God created nothing immaterial, while the Platonic One created only immaterial forms. He also cites the passage in *Timaeus*, 41 A—C (dogmatic for all Neoplatonists), on the created gods, or "the manifest gods": Sun, Moon, Stars, Heaven. Why the monotheistic claims of the chosen people, the Jews? So, too, spoke the prophets, and Jesus of Nazareth, and Paul, distinguished by the special hatred of the Apostate, Paul, "who altogether and in every way outdid all the mountebanks and swindlers that ever were." Paul, too, is a man without any consistency in his tenets; "he changes colour like a cuttle fish clinging to the rocks."

Why did God permit us, the Hellenes, to worship idols so long? Why should He be a jealous or angry God[1]? Now each town or nation has its own specific tutelary god; but all of these are in the One, their Father[2], and all are one (*theokrasia*) and all have their several spheres and functions of service and power. A Providence has administered all these differences. God must be free from emotions—why does He suffer the polytheism of the nations? You blaspheme, whether you say He would not or that He could not. Why do you worship this bastard Son of His[3], whom God really never considered "His own" (ἴδιον) The history of human culture belongs to the Hellenes. Moses treated the Canaanites cruelly; how just and righteous by contrast were the Greek heroes Minos and Aiakos! He accepts as true Numa's association with Egeria. The Sibylline books, the Auspices, the sacred shield of Mars

[1] So we saw Celsus argue, too. [2] Neumann, p. 179.

[3] Τὸν νόθον υἱὸν τοῦτον (Neumann, p. 189). The long suppressed hatred of Julian is here revealed, and he would have been quite unable, had he lived, to deal fairly as between Christians and pagans, in his further administration of affairs.

(the *ancile*) were splendid and direct gifts of the gods. Such things you should honour, and not worship the wood of the cross[1].

The foolish Christians "reached such a point of perdition, that, abandoning the eternal gods [the Olympians] they deserted [μεταβῆναι] to the corpse of the Jews." You Christians would be true monotheists, if you had remained with us, whereas now you are the real polytheists[2]. Neither Jesus nor Paul ordered you to persecute the Hellenists; the fact is they never expected Christianity would spread so. They were satisfied to deceive servant-maids and slaves, and, through these, men like Cornelius and Sergius. Jesus was put on the Roman census under Quirinius; what good did He do to His people? Only John dared to say that Jesus created, nor did he say it distinctly or lucidly. And still He was impotent to change the purpose of His own friends and kindred[3]. Why do you nibble at[4] the learning current among the Greeks, if indeed the reading of your Scriptures is sufficient? The truth is that the influence of this learning is really unfriendly to the "godlessness" (ἀθεότης) of the Christians. The more finely endowed classical teachers among the Christians really are friendly to the Olympians. You call your Scriptures divine[5], but they cannot benefit either character or intelligence in the least, while you (*sic*) turn over to Satan the writers from which every virtue may be gained. I know the power of the Olympians. Aesculapius[6] healed me often, Zeus knows, by gently conveyed suggestion[7].

[1] *Op. cit.* 196. [2] *Op. cit.* 198. [3] *Op. cit.* 202.
[4] Παρεσθίετε, as of some forbidden food.
[5] *Op. cit.* 206. [6] *Op. cit.* 207.
[7] Ὑπαγορεύσας. This seems to point to theurgy.

Julian's contempt for the sacrament of baptism is disclosed; he cites verbatim Paul (1 Cor. vi, 9–11), "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, ye are sanctified," etc., and so he also attacks Matthew xxviii, 19, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them, etc."

You are not consistent followers of Matthew, Luke, and Mark, when you[1] accept the divinity of Christ from John. The latter was influenced in this way: He heard from the West that the tombs of Peter and Paul were "honoured," or served (*θεραπευόμενα*), and so he devised his theory of the Logos and Incarnation.

Julian further professes[2] that he worshipped the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that Abraham in observing meteors practised manticism (cf. Gen. xv). Consistent Neoplatonist that he was, Julian practised asceticism, spending sleepless nights on a hard pallet[3], and the luxurious habits of Antioch were very unsympathetic to him. He eschewed the theatres (where the amours of the Olympians were stock subjects); he cared not for horse-races, dancers, mimes, musicians, which abounded in the great city on the Orontes. When Julian came to worship and sacrifice, the Antiochenes crowded the temples mainly from curiosity, he complains, as in a show where the Emperor was chief performer[4]; rarely came they on account of the gods. The Apollo temple at Daphne, near Antioch, Julian claims outright was destroyed "by the bold acts of the godless men[5]," through neglect of the custodians. His many entries

[1] *Op. cit.* 223. [2] *Op. cit.* 230.

[3] Ἀγρυπναὶ νύκτες ἐν στιβάδι (*Misopogon*, 340 B).

[4] *Misopogon*, 344 B.

[5] Ταῖς...τῶν ἀθέων τόλμαις ἀφανισθέν (*op. cit.* 346 C). Cf. Sozomenos (*H. E.* v, 20, p. 511, ed. Hussey, 1860) on the curious act of retribution by Julian.

into the temples he intimates did not at all deplete the attendance by the Christians on their numerous church holidays; the town, as a whole is designated by him a non-pagan city, and the current phrase and winged word was this: "We have no fault to find with two letters, the *Chi* [Christ] and the *Kappa* [*Konstantios*]." So then Christ is your "city-holding" or tutelary deity, instead of Zeus, Apollo or Kalliope.

The common folk had made fun of Julian in Anapaests (marching rhythm). His "Beardhater" (*Misopogon*) is his personal rejoinder; he tries to scoin and scoff, but he has been pained and annoyed to the quick. There were indeed towns near Antioch (unnamed by him) which had at once re-erected the sanctuaries of the gods, and "overturned all the tombs of the godless" (the martyrs' monuments, I take it) at the signal given, but a few days before Julian's writing. We must not forget, that Julian officially was *Pontifex Maximus*; and so he strove in the autumn of 362 to re-establish the Apollo temple at Daphne, when the much-cited solitary "priest" brought one goose, and the great and rich city —nothing; whereupon Julian belaboured the city council in an angry harangue; for, while his favourite self-conception was that of a philosopher, his control of temperament was not always successful.

His affectation of impartiality between Arian and Athanasian "Galileans," and between all the latter and the "Hellenes" was probably specious only, for while he permitted the exiled pro-Nicene churchmen to return, he forbade their resuming control of their sees. His motive was to deepen the chasm in the church. And so he wrote to Alexandria[1] that he was astounded

[1] *Ep.* 26.

that Athanasius had occupied once more his episcopal chair there, and he forthwith banished that churchman from the town and from all Egypt. He was furious against Athanasius, "hated of the gods [*Ep.* 6] who had had the assurance in my reign to baptize some Greek ladies of distinguished social station." Julian showed his colours there. His (official) friendliness to the Jews is well known. In *Epistola* 25 he deals with them as a body. There are to be no more special imposts on that race. They are to include him in their prayers. Jehovah is referred to as "the Almighty..., who has deigned to crown me with His spotless right hand." Julian was then on the point of beginning his invasion of Persia; the temple was to be rebuilded as well as Jerusalem, in which he hoped to join the race in worship of the Almighty. The efforts to rebuild the temple were somewhat futile.

The Saturnalia of December, 362, in the last Christmas season of his life, suggested to him the composition of a *Satura* in the manner of Lucian or Seneca[1], to glorify Helios, whose anniversary began December 25 (on Christmas day). It is a banquet (*symposion*) of emperors, Romulus being host and inviting all the gods, Silenus is chief jester and critic as well, the admission or non-admission of emperors involves approval or condemnation. Julian evidently had been reading in Tacitus and Plutarch. The bodies (Plato's *Phaedrus*) were light, because immaterial; Plato dominated there—the beauty of the gods was to be viewed by the intelligence only. Julius Caesar is the type of ambition, vying with Zeus himself. Augustus is versatile and slippery. Tiberius exhibits countless scars on his back[2]. The

[1] The introduction of Anapaests is somewhat in Seneca's vein.

[2] As the typical tyrant (Tacitus, *Annals*, VI, 6; Plato, *Gorg.* 524 E).

pederastic habits of Trajan are scored[1], also Hadrian's relations to Antinous. Marcus Aurelius is extolled as the greatest of them all and as Julian's personal ideal[2], the philosopher-emperor need not utter a word of argument. Julian's uncle, Constantine, the last in that series, is treated with undisguised hatred. His victories are belittled, his achievements mere "Adonis-gardens" (this, I take it, expresses Julian's hope that Christianity would wither soon). Constantine was indifferent to justice, and all his passion was for luxury. In the end, each emperor chooses (by affinity) the company of some god (Plato's *Phaedrus*). So Constantine consorts with Luxury and Debauchery.

In this company also appears *Jesus* and makes the following announcement[3]:

> Whatever corrupter (φθορεύς), whatever bloodguilty person, whatever accurst and vile person there be[4], let him come forward with confidence, for with this water here [of baptism] having washed him, I will at once exhibit him as clean; and if for a second time he becomes liable for the same things, I will grant to him that, after beating his breast and striking his head, he may become clean.

This seems to be Julian's sneer at the parable of the repentant publican (Luke xviii, 13). We observe here how the personal hatred of Julian for Constantine and Constantius was curiously fused with the imperial philosopher's hatred of the Gospel. And still Julian endeavoured to assume or transfer certain features from what we may call the working system of the Christian church.

In this connection, there is particularly significant the *Fragmentum Epistolae*[5], a kind of pastoral letter of

[1] Hertlein's text, 311 C. [2] *Op. cit.* 317 C sqq. [3] *Op. cit.* 336 B.
[4] I think Constantine is meant by Julian. [5] 288 A sqq.

the *Pontifex Maximus*, to organize and improve the cult of paganism in the Hellenic restoration. The life of the priest must be more worthy of respect than that of the ordinary citizen. Charity[1] must be practised, which wins the grace of the gods, because it assimilates man to the deity (Plato), and men owe everything to the gods. Relieve the poor; do not blame the gods for the poverty of the poor, but blame the insatiable enrichment of the rich rather. Whom did charitable enrichment ever make poor? Extend your charities even to the enemy and to those in prison[2], showing commiseration even to the wicked. Every man is kin to every other[3], whether we are all descended from one original father and mother, or men came forth in numbers in the dawn of creation; and we are kindred to the gods also, that lore having been "transmitted to us *through the theurgic men of old*," a lore involved in myths (292 B). He hopes for a life beyond the grave, "where the immortal soul is separated and the body has turned to earth [*χωριστείσης μὲν τῆς ἀθανάτου ψυχῆς*]." The Olympus is promised the pious for Tartarus[4]. While the quarrels of the gods are productions of the poets, the priests must avoid all erotic themes; also the Epicureans and Sceptics must be banished from the services.

For entire provinces Julian appointed one chief priest for each, a parallel to Christian bishops. This chief priest must[5] satisfy himself as to the fitness of the common priests. These must not permit their slaves or wives to attend Christian worship. They must not personally enter theatres or wineshops, nor pursue any

[1] *Φιλανθρωπία* (289 A).
[2] 291 A.
[3] The *κοινωνικόν* of the Stoics.
[4] Hertlein's text, 300 B sq.
[5] *Ep.* 49.

debasing trade. "Ungodliness" (ἀθεότης) had grown much through Christian charities, and now pagan charities must be systematically established. No Jews ever begged, and the wicked Galileans looked after their own[1]. The Hellenists must regularly train their people to such beneficence. Whenever state officials enter the temples of the gods, they are simply private worshippers as soon as they cross the threshold. The priest rules there. In a letter[2] to the Alexandrians, Sarapis is called their "city-holding god" (πολιοῦχος). Isis is queen of Egypt. I am (he says) ashamed if any Alexandrian confesses being a Galilean. Each country derived its religion from the ancient statutes[3]; when these were undisturbed, we enjoyed all the blessings. What good has "this novel preachment" (τὸ καινὸν τοῦτο κήρυγμα) ever brought to Alexandria? Tell me. Alexandria did not grow through the words of Jesus, "nor does it owe its administration through which it is prosperous, to the most hateful doctrine of the Galileans" (433).

Early in 363 (March) Julian began his fatal invasion of Persia. His rejection of the submissive offers of Shapur's envoys had been determined[4] by the theurgic enquiries of his favourite Neoplatonist, Maximus. Julian's death was due to his impetuous and impatient temperament[5], when he rushed beyond his own line during what seemed to be a panic-like flight of the Persians. Here Ammianus is our best guide. He was on the spot. He says that a cavalry spear, the source of which was unknown[6], cut the tendons of the fingers

[1] Hertlein's text, 430 D.
[2] *Ep.* 51.
[3] Τῶν παλαιῶν Θεσμῶν—his favourite phrase. *Op. cit.* 433 B.
[4] According to Socrates, *H. E.* B, 21.
[5] As was the destruction of his own transports on the river.
[6] Incertum *unde* is a critical suggestion of Haupt's.

of his right hand, grazed the skin of his upper arm, pierced his ribs, and entered the liver. Julian died in his tent that night, a consistent Neoplatonist (if we may trust the Antiochene, Ammianus, and the other Antiochene, Libanius), dying, I say, so as to seek the greatest possible consolation in the hope of a better life for the soul, surveying his chequered and, in the main, wonderful career and the aims of his brief principate of eighteen months. He also said that his faith in manticism (*fides fatidica*) had foretold him such an end. He refused to name any successor. His last words were a discourse with the theurgic Neoplatonists, Maximus and Priscus, on "the loftiness of souls[1]."

[1] It seems proper to transcribe here the general estimate of his faults as set down by his admirer, Ammianus (xxv, 4, 16 sqq.): "His *ingenium* was somewhat flighty, but he controlled it by the most straightforward purpose, permitting himself to be corrected when he deviated from sound principles. His speech was rather prolix and he rarely was silent, devoted as he was to the excessive enquiry into manticism, so that in this matter he seemed to equal the Emperor Hadrian, more a superstitious than a regular observer of religious functions, slaying countless victims without any regard for economy, so that people computed that if he were to return from Persia, there would be a shortage of oxen.... He enjoyed the applause of the masses, and sought praise immoderately, even from the most trifling matters, often making a pretence of conferring with unworthy men in his passion for popularity."

Libanius (*Or.* XVIII, 274) argues that no Persian hurled the fatal spear, because no Persian was honoured for the feat, although Shapur, through heralds, proclaimed great honours and rewards for whoever could prove his claim to them. Libanius, in fact, intimates that Julian was slain by one of his own soldiers. Libanius' *Or.* XVII is a document of the crushing sorrow felt by Hellenists when the news came from Mesopotamia. Socrates (*H. E.* III, 21) may have written with Ammianus before him. His words are cautious: Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς παρῆν ἱππότης μέν, καὶ ἐπερρώννυε τὸν στρατόν, ἄοπλος δὲ [oblitus loricae—Ammianus] τῇ τῆς εὐτυχίας ἐλπίδι μόνῃ θαρρῶν, ἐξ ἀφανοῦς δὲ ἀκόντιον φέρεται. The much quoted exclamation, "Thou hast vanquished, O Galilean," occurs only in Theodoretus, *H. E.* 142.

CHAPTER IX

THE OLD BELIEVERS IN ROME AND THE DUSK OF THE GODS

TO gain a closer vision of the last struggle of classic paganism and Christianity is much more difficult than the present writer conceived it to be years ago. There is indeed a goodly array of documents and utterances on both sides, there are leaders of multitudes and the cries of captains, but those multitudes are now dumb. Let us first survey certain edicts hostile to the pagan ritual and the further practice of public idolatry, imperial decrees preceding and succeeding the meteoric apparition of Julian, hope and champion of the Old Believers, whose pen no less than his decrees had feverishly wrought at the task of making Christianity odious or contemptible, and glorifying what he called the Hellenism of the fathers.

In the year 341 A.D. the two successors then surviving of Constantine (Constantius and Constans) sent to the acting praetorian prefect at Rome the following edict[1]: "Let there be an end of superstition. Let the madness of sacrifices be done away with. For whoever shall dare to celebrate sacrifices against the law of the late emperor, our father, and against the present order of Our Clemency, against him proper punishment and immediate sentence shall be enacted." If or how far ecclesiastics caused this or the subsequent decrees is beyond our ken. The very next year (342) saw an edict addressed to Aconius Catullinus, prefect of the city, a decree

[1] *V.* Clinton, *Fasti Romani*, s. a. 341, column 2, *De Paganis.*

obviously meant to be a modification of the one just given, a decree which I believe was in a measure to gratify the pagan nobility of the old capital. Catullinus himself seems to have stood with the old order, for his daughter Fabia Aconia Paulina was then or later wedded to the man who more than any other nobleman of Rome asserted and exemplified the old order of religion as well as many other cults brought from a distance that could possibly buttress paganism. This was Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, who will engage our attention a little further on.

Somewhere between 343 and 350 Firmicus Maternus wrote his appeal to Constantius and Constans, calling upon them to suppress, nay to exterminate, all rites and practices of paganism as maintained, we may assume, in Rome particularly where the memories of world-power, the grand edifices commemorating that power, and the very calendar of the secular year, were all inextricably bound up with the former state religion of that proud commonwealth. In his analysis of mythology, Firmicus (like Arnobius) follows consistently the method of Euhemerism, viz. assuming a succession of deliberate acts of apotheosis dealing with deceased kings and other secular personages. How sincere was the Christian faith of this fervid controversialist it is now somewhat difficult to determine. Is he identical with the writer on astrology, or was this work really his own but of a previous stage? He cites Porphyry repeatedly. Evidently that Neoplatonist was still in great vogue with the cultured pagans of the day. Firmicus calls him "the foe of the God of truth" and designates the gods of paganism as "the gods of Porphyry[1]," to whom

[1] P. 19, ed. Bursian.

that apologist of paganism tried to give substance by physical interpretation. Theurgy, too, was taught by him: How to call upon certain gods, like the Egyptian Serapis; how to *make* them come; how to impose the worshipper's will upon them.

Firmicus certainly dealt with the actualities of the day, the ritual pursuits of the Old Believers, confined in the main to those who were initiated, cults pursued indeed not publicly, but not secretly either. Such was the cult of Isis of the Nile and Sarapis. Firmicus fully describes the mysteries and the pantomimic reproduction of the original myth[1]. Nor is the "*physica ratio*" of Porphyry's theory left unrecorded. The very formularies of what we may call the liturgy of these esoteric meetings are published by this Christian propagandist[2]. So, too, are cited the cult of the Great Mother, of Mithras, the Sun Invincible, of Bacchus, of the Eleusinian Mysteries, of the emasculated god, Attis. That the leaders of these cults actually challenged comparison with the Christian Eucharist, nay with the doctrine of Redemption and bestowal of eternal life, may be read between the lines of this important treatise. The aim of this pamphlet and the appeal to the sons of Constantine is quite radical: "Melt up the gods in the mint! Confiscate all the gifts [*donaria*] reposing in the temples." Some of these were jewels of rare costliness.

In 350 Constans was slain in southern Gaul, and the Pretender of the West, Magnentius, eventually secured control of Italy and the capital. He seems to have

[1] P. 2, Bursian.

[2] As in the Isis worship. As for Firmicus' insight into historical Christianity, it is in the main quite correct; he cites the Gospels in the Greek fashion, "*Cata* Johannem," "*Cata* Lucam." It is well known that Greek long dominated the Christian church at Rome.

given a full measure of toleration, if not more, to the pagan aristocracy of Rome, which more than ever, amid the crumbling of the frontiers, they were fond of calling the "Eternal City." But Magnentius, in the summer of 353, at Lyons, took his own life. In November of that year Constantius sent an edict to the city prefect, Naeratius Cerealis (a Christian), that there be done away with the *nocturnal sacrifices* permitted under Magnentius and by the latter's initiative ("aboleantur sacrificia nocturna Magnentio auctore permissa[1]"); little doubt that the *taurobolia* of the esoteric Mithras-cult were particularly meant.

In May 357 the Emperor Constantius, for the first and last time in his reign, visited Rome. He was indeed impressed with the power and prestige of the nobles still adhering to the older order. If we may fully trust the account set down by the foremost one of that class, some twenty-seven years later[2],

> he in nowise cut short the privileges of the Vestal Virgins, he replenished the priesthoods with members of the aristocracy[3], he did not refuse state grant to Roman ritual, and, following the delighted Senate through all the streets of the Eternal City, he beheld with mien unruffled the shrines, read the names of the Gods inscribed on the gable front of the temples, he made enquiry as to the origin of the same, he marvelled at the founders, and, while he himself followed other religious usages, *he preserved these to the empire.*

He ordered that a further obelisk be sent to Rome. He addressed the nobles in the curia, the plebs on the forum. The gigantic structures of the public baths, the huge pile of the Coliseum, the Pantheon and other *mirabilia* of Rome broke through the affectation of immobility of mien and demeanour which he had planned

[1] Socrates, *H. E.* VI, 32. [2] Symmachus, *Relatio* of 384 A.D.
[3] "Replevit nobilibus sacerdotia."

to assume[1]. All this was fifty-seven years before Alaric sacked Rome.

In the last year of his life, on February 14, at Antioch, after his cousin Julian had risen against him, Constantius issued an edict expressing his great admiration for the Christian clergy. While he was marching against the renegade, a stroke of apoplexy carried him off at Mopsukrene in Cilicia, on November 3, 361. Julian, in his turn, perished from a Persian javelin, in June 363, in Mesopotamia, and there was henceforth no pagan emperor. After the summer of 363, then, the aristocratic pagans of Rome more and more felt themselves attached to something destined to pass, whether they considered the steadily advancing disintegration of the Empire, or the religious aloofness or hostility of the secular rulers, who issued decrees from Constantinople or Milan or Treves and but very rarely appeared any more on the Tiber. As to Rome as it was under Valentinian I, Ammian has described it, and Gibbon transcribed[2]. Ammian of Antioch, an officer returned from Julian's fatal campaign, composed his continuation of Tacitus in the old capital, after 371, in a Latinity which indeed is nondescript; I believe he preferred Rome to Antioch because of his affiliations and affinity with the Old Believers, the great city on the Orontes being much more decidedly or exclusively Christian than Rome on the Tiber. In his history he often refers to the "Eternal Deity" (*numen sempiterum*); we learn that "the soul, freed from the bonds of the body...gathers visions of the night[3]."

[1] Ammianus, XVI, 10, 14.
[2] Also Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter*.
[3] XIV, 11, 8.

Speaking of the occult worship of Julian in Gaul, in 356 A.D., he says: "He worshipped Mercury, whom the doctrines of the *theologi* [in Neoplatonism] have revealed to be the swifter sense of the universe, stirring the motion of minds[1]" "by the weapons of Apollo, who is rated as the Sun[2]." Ammian[3] himself enters into a deliberate defence of theurgy and divination: "The spirit of all the elements, inasmuch as always and everywhere it is a vivid force, through the movement of enduring bodies for advance perception; from these, which we attain through various branches of learning, it communicates to us the privileges of divination," etc., etc., coupling all this with Themis and associating her as the power that causes prescience of those things settled by fatal decree[4] and placed by the ancient myth-makers or *theologi* on the couch and throne of Zeus, who is the force bestowing life.

And as for auguries and auspices, "they are not gathered from the judgment of birds who know nothing of the future—not even a fool will say that—but God directs the flight of birds," etc., etc. And so dreams, too, are explained and defended[5]. Further we learn that pre-eminent personages have been favoured by a particular spirit of revelation and aid (that this was the way one must understand the immortal lines of Homer when he has the celestial gods communicate with heroes), in fact a *genius familiaris* such as favoured and aided men like Pythagoras, Socrates, Numa, the elder Scipio, and, as some think, Marius and Augustus, Hermes

[1] XVI, 5. [2] XV, 4, 3.

[3] Gibbon calls him "that moderate historian," not a very exhaustive designation of this Old Believer.

[4] "Quae τεθειμένα sermo Graecus appellat," XXI, 1, 8.

[5] Ammianus, XXI, 14, 1 sqq.

Trismegistus, Apollonius of Tyana and—*Plotinus*. "Into such these spirits enter and teach them greater things, when they [the spirits] have realized that they [the favoured men's souls] are clean and free from the stain of sinning, the association with the body being an unspotted one."

Clearly Porphyry had an earnest follower in this veteran officer of Julian. Like the latter, Ammian sneered at the fruitless doctrinal controversies of Christian bishops using up the post service of the government in going to their synods and councils[1], a sneer repeated and enjoyed by the sympathetic Gibbon. Plato is a rival of Jupiter[2]. As a pagan, Ammian calls cremation *ritus noster*[3]. Such data of the Neoplatonic pagan could be multiplied, but space forbids.

Also he reports[4] the life and tastes of the Roman aristocracy as it was about 369–370 A.D. Pride of name; some affecting silk raiment, attended by huge numbers of slaves, often freely displaying their interest in notorious courtesans, offering meanwhile to their flatterers their knees or hands to kiss; they are passionately fond of chariot races. Parasites extol the marble entablatures of their dining-rooms. Their cultural interests are superficial or narrow. They cruelly punish their slaves for slight mistakes. Many of them[5], while not believing in any gods, are absolutely dependent on astrological direction even in trifling matters of life. It is all like Juvenal in prose. The plebs is absorbed in cups, gam-

[1] "Dum ritum omnem ad suum trahere conantur arbitrium," XXI, 16, 18.

[2] XXII, 16, 21. [3] XXVII, 5, 10.

[4] XXVIII, 4, 6 sqq. Historians like Gibbon or Gregorovius have long utilized this interesting digression of the Antiochene historian.

[5] XXIV.

bling, horse races quite especially; fond of hissing also in theatres and of uttering shouts of derision; in all respects a community outwardly at least not much affected as yet by Christianity.

For the Roman clergy the veteran of Julian entertains no regard whatever. He relates with apparent delight the bitter struggle of Damasus and Ursinus for the episcopal chair of Rome in 367 A.D.[1], a contention so fierce that Viventius the city prefect, finding himself impotent to curb their fury, withdrew to his suburban villa. Ammianus adds: "It is a well established fact, that in the basilica of Sicininus, where there is a meeting-place [*conventiculum*] of the Christian rite, there were found in one day a hundred and thirty-seven bodies of persons slain and that the enraged plebs was subsequently calmed but with difficulty." Ursinus is held responsible by the church historian Socrates[2] and as setting himself up after the regular election was an accomplished fact, the furious partisanship of the common people arising out of themselves. The animus of Ammian indeed is quite obvious, and even more so, when he, a passionate Old Believer, goes on to rebuke the great ecclesiastics of Rome as enriched by the gifts of matrons and riding out in comfortable carriages, sumptuously arrayed and feasting royally; how humble and ascetic and plain, by contrast, was the appearance of certain men of the provincial clergy[3]. (The humanist Erasmus in his *Encomium Moriae* spoke of cardinals and bishops, in his own day, in a similar vein.)

Some years before this time, occurred in Rome a baptism of an Old Believer which excited great attention both among pagans and Christians, an incident, too,

[1] XXVII, 3, 12. [2] IV, 29, 1 sqq. [3] XXVII, 3, 14, 15.

which some twenty years later exerted a very strong influence on a younger fellow professional, Augustine. I now refer to Marius Victorinus, a rhetor and scholar of Rome, and so noted that a statue was erected in his honour on the forum of Trajan[1]. He was a great student of Aristotle's dialectical works, some of which he translated into Latin as well as some Neoplatonic works which Augustine later on in turn studied in that translation. With all this critical scholarship, he was up to late age "a worshipper of idols and a sharer in sacrilegious rites," to which then almost all the Roman aristocracy was devoted[2], rites of which Marius Victorinus himself had been the literary apologist. His public profession of Christianity, with baptism following, was one of the sensations at the capital. He even abandoned his classes during Julian's short reign, preferring his new faith to his old profession[3].

But, to proceed, it was the bishop Damasus who gave to Jerome of Stridon the commission to prepare a new Latin version of the Bible, the Vulgate, so called. And it was in the same episcopate that many Roman aristocrats continued, in Rome itself, the peculiar esoteric cult of Mithras, the Sungod of Persia[4]. The most conspicuous of these, Praetextatus, figures as the chief interlocutor in that noted imitation—outward imitation —of Plato's *Symposium*, the *Saturnalia* of Macrobius, written probably under the Emperor Honorius. How many, or what particular antiquarian or literary ele-

[1] *V.* data and references in Teuffel, *History of Roman Literature*, 408, particularly Augustine's *Confessions*, VIII, 3.

[2] So Augustine was informed by his older Christian friend in Milan, Simplicianus. Aug. *Conf.* VIII, 3.

[3] Augustine, *op. cit.* VIII, 10.

[4] *V.* Cumont, in Roscher's *Lexikon der Mythologie*, s.v. *Mithras*.

ments of this compilation were due to Varro, or Gellius or Labeo or others, concerns us not at all and is quite unimportant in itself. Not so the concerns and interests of the Old Believers as they are here represented, discoursing in the library of Praetextatus and elsewhere in Rome in the mansions of the great, in the waning December days, the Saturnian holidays of old Rome, a season when the Christians in their basilicas celebrated the birth at Bethlehem. In the conventicles of Macrobius other guests are Symmachus[1], senator, orator, admired imitator of Ciceronian Latinity, holder of high imperial offices, and close to Praetextatus as a preeminent upholder of the religion of the past. Further there is the young and modest but learned teacher of letters and commentator on Vergil, Servius Honoratus; there are present also the senators and antiquarians, Caecina Albinus and Furius Albinus; there is the senator Flavianus, a fanatical adherent of the old religion, cousin of Symmachus; other guests are Eusebius, a prominent Greek rhetor then teaching in Rome, Eustathius, a philosophical scholar, the distinguished physician Disarius, Horus, a native of Egypt, formerly a boxer, but now a Cynic philosopher, and others. Only those of the same cult are admitted or expected; in fact, these Old Believers impress us now as men who had firmly acquired what we may call the esoteric habit[2].

In that company, then, Vettius Agoratus Praetextatus lays down a threefold distinction of the Old Believers' religious concerns: (1) The mysterious nature of the

[1] The best edition is that by Seeck, in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, 1883.

[2] "An altius quiddam, cui *remotis arbitris* opus sit, ex disposito [by programme] convenistis?"

deity, (2) the matter bound up with the myths, (3) the published expositions of these as made by physical interpretation. It is, by the bye, quite in the vein of Euhemerism, that Janus, a historical personage (quasi-historical) is here said to have set up the worship of Saturn in Italy. Also there is presented here a vast mass of data of Roman ritual, derived from Varro in the main[1]. The very seclusion and aloofness of the company seems to intimate to the reader of Macrobius, that the *public rites* were then in the main an antiquarian remembrance, no longer performed in public. We have in Macrobius, then, the symbolism and the kindred interpretation of the cult-figures (*simulacra*) such as of Saturn, of Janus, Bacchus, Mars, Mercury, Aesculapius, Hygieia, and Serapis, of Astarte on Lebanon, Arcadian Pan. Egypt is often brought in and we are reminded of Iamblichus' work, On the Cult-figures[2], then a standard work among the cultured pagans. Furthermore, we are confronted once more with that characteristic *Leitmotiv* of expiring paganism, the fusion of many into greater unity and simplicity, "*theocrasia*." The current theory, then, was that the poets, too, such as Homer and Hesiod, nay even Vergil, borrowed their figments "from the shrines of philosophy[3]." "Divine reasoning" commends the doctrine, that nearly all sublunar deities

[1] Often transcribed in the present tense, which however must not deceive us. Cf. 1, 15, 6. Elsewhere the Vestals *were wont to kindle* (*accendebant*) (*Saturnalia*, 1, 12, 6).

[2] Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων. Julian's enthusiastic devotion to that author and authority must have given additional lustre and currency to Iamblichus among all the Old Believers. The general aim of Iamblichus was to prove that the idols were really divine and replete with the divine presence.

[3] "Cave aestimes, poetarum gregem, cum de dis fabulantur, non ab adytis plerumque philosophiae semina mutuari" (*Sat.* 1, 17, 2).

refer to, or are, powers of the Sun; Apollo is so explained, also Mars and Bacchus. Symbolism, names, myths, appurtenances as well as the later philosophers, are equally drawn upon for these theses. Thus, too, are interpreted Aesculapius, Hercules, Serapis and Isis, the Tyrian Melkart, Adonis of the Assyrians, Attis and Kybele; all are brought into the demonstration.

In his discourse on the Dream of Scipio, Macrobius reveals himself even more as an earnest Platonist; we have the "Supreme God," identical with "*the good*" (τὸ ἀγαθόν) or with the *First Cause*; identical, too, with the primary forms of all being, *the ideas*[1]; but together with these we have the "Powers of Air or of Ether and the other gods[2]"; we have the twelve Signs of the Zodiac as domiciles of gods[3], the esoteric discussions as to the return of the souls[4], completed purgation of souls after death, etc. Plotinus is cited as the only peer of Plato and his ethical categories[5]. The critique of Aristotle directed at Plato's theory of the Soul is set forth and is replied to with great earnestness and fulness[6].

Both Macrobius and Servius, in the Rome of Theodosius and Honorius, were great expounders of Vergil. We cannot fail to perceive that they strove to inject into the great national epic and basic work of all Latin education, a virtual omniscience of religious allusion or meaning—precisely as Porphyry and the other later Hellenists interpreted Homer—claiming for Vergil a profundity which the "common run of readers overlook or fail to grasp[7]." The Vergilian commentary of Servius, too (one of the company of Old Believers in

[1] I, 2, 4. [2] I, 2, 13. [3] I, 21, 24.
[4] I, 13, 16, 17. [5] I, 8, 5. [6] II, 14, 1 sqq.
[7] III, 7, 1.

the library of Praetextatus), abounds in passages resuscitating or preserving the knowledge of the religion and ritual of the older Rome, and Varro was freely and incessantly drawn upon by Servius also[1]. He, too, cites myths and legends, he cites physical interpretation, he cites the "loftiest meaning" as furnished by philosophy. Orpheus was a "theologus," also Musaeus[2]. Frequently and with a certain personal modesty, he used the term "Prudentiores," meaning thereby the Neoplatonists and their esoteric followers[3]. His own notes on book VI of the *Aeneid*—the hero's descent among the souls, mainly souls before incarnation—are replete with pertinent material. His own approval of Platonism is clearly a personal one, based on his own study and conviction.

In lieu of many minor references I will beg permission to transcribe one or two passages from Servius directly. On *Aeneid* VI, 714 (Lethaei ad fluminis undam),

> If the soul is eternal and a particle of the Supreme Spirit, for what reason then has it not complete vision, nor possesses wisdom and vitality so great as to be able to perceive everything? Because, when it has begun to descend into the body, it drinks folly and forgetfulness; hence it cannot completely attain the force of its own deity[4]. Now it does forget, according to the

[1] Cf. the doctoral thesis, in New York University, by Justus F. Holstein: "Rites and Ritual acts as prescribed by the Roman Religion, according to the Commentary of Servius on Vergil's *Aeneid*," New York, 1916; and a further doctoral thesis, by John P. Taylor, "The Mythology of Vergil's *Aeneid*, according to Servius," New York, 1917.

[2] VI, 669.

[3] *V.* Servius on Pan, *Eclogues*, II, 31, one of the most elaborate passages now available.

[4] This must be understood from Plato's *Phaedrus*: The souls, before incarnation, in heaven, each follow definite or specific deities.

poets, the past; according to the philosophers, the future.... Now the philosophers teach what the soul loses in its descent through the various [planetary] orbits; whence also the astrologists [*mathematici*] devise, that our body and soul are connected in this way; because, when the souls descend, they absorb the stupidity of Saturn, the wrathfulness of Mars, the sensuality of Venus, Mercury's greed for gain, Jupiter's yearning for sway; which things cause confusion to the souls, that they may not be able to use their own strength and their specific forces.

In the following (on *Aeneid* VI, 724), we seem to have an echo of Plato's *Timaeus*: "*God*, therefore, is a certain divine spirit, which fused into [permeating] the four elements, creates everything. Therefore, if everything springs from the elements, they have one origin and the nature of all is identical. But let us see what in us is from God and what from the four elements." This was written when Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine were the leaders of the general Christian church[1].

But it is time for us now to gain a closer vision of the last champions of paganism among the Roman aristocracy. We have briefly touched upon their philosophical sympathies; let us now make some record also of their religious practices and worship. Our data are drawn mainly from inscriptions in which the Old Believers recorded, often with monumental publicity, what they cherished, although indeed many of the rites commemorated were distinctly esoteric, admitting to participation but very narrow circles. In the very reign of Valentinian I, in 367 or 368 A.D., Praetextatus, as

[1] It is overwhelmingly clear, that Macrobius and Servius in the domain of this Higher Interpretation, used pretty much the same material—a matter elusive to our own remoteness. The tone of Macrobius is more positive and fervid, that of Servius more quiet and sober. Cf. *Serviana*, by E. G. Sihler, *American Journal of Philology*, 1910.

praefectus urbi actually *replaced*[1] on the edge of the Forum the twelve cult-figures of the *Dei Consentes*, gilded, which stood there in Cicero's time: Jupiter, Juno, Neptune, Ceres, Vulcan, Minerva, Mars, Venus, Diana, Apollo, Mercury, Vesta. At the same time "he restored the old form of their worship[2]." Publicity certainly could not go any further nor could the signature of high official action be more impressively added thereto. It was Julian himself who had appointed Praetextatus proconsul of Achaia, 361–362; he became *praefectus urbi* in 366, was *praefectus praetorio* in 384; his city mansion, it seems, was on the Esquiline. The inscriptions[3] call him Priest of Vesta, priest of the Sun, Augur, *Tauroboliatus* (one who has performed the highest rites in the worship of Mithras), *Neocorus* (really a Greek term, "temple-warden"), *Hierophant* (this seems to point to the Eleusinian mysteries); in a word, he sustained in his person an accumulation of honours and functions of pagan cults, Roman, Greek, Persian, which in itself most eloquently betokens the character of the times we are striving to delineate.

The great inscription[4] further extols him thus: "For whatever has been handed down in both tongues [Greek and Latin] through the care of sages *to whom the gate of heaven* stands ajar[5]"; after which is commended his critical scholarship, his public honours (the inscription

[1] *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, VI, 102. Varro, *De R. Rustica*, I, 1, 4.

[2] By Mommsen's restoration: "Cultu in antiquam formam restituto." Cf. Seeck's Symmachus, pp. lxxxiii sqq.

[3] *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, VI, 1779–1779 A, 1780.

[4] *Ibid.* VI, 1779 A.

[5] "Porta quis caeli patet"—we may think of Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus.

was composed by his widow Paulina); but all these things had been futile in his own estimation. His highest satisfaction had centred on his priestly honours, as his spouse attested in fervid terms:

> Thou, O my husband, freeing me, through the blessing of instruction, me, a woman pure and chaste, delivering from the lot of death; into the temples thou dost conduct me, consecratest me a handmaiden to the gods; with thee as witness am I steeped in all the mysteries, thou pious consort honourest me a priestess of Dindymene[1] and of Attis, with the initiation of the steer [the rites of Mithras], priestess of Hecate as well as of the Eleusinian Demeter.

She hopes to join her husband soon, after death. It seems that her own initiation in the various Greek mysteries occurred during the short official restoration of paganism by Julian, when her husband resided in Greece as proconsul of that province[2]. She was a priestess of Isis also.

As to the claims of the Mithras worshippers, Cumont[3] puts it thus:

> We have seen that the Theology of the Mysteries made Mithras the equivalent [*sic*] of the Alexandrine Logos, one may assume [possibly] that this was not the only resemblance which exists [*sic*] between him and Christ, and that the figure of the god who reluctantly resolves to stab to death the primeval steer in order to call into being the race of men and to redeem it from death, has been compared with the figure of the Redeemer, who sacrificed himself for the salvation of the world.

For the general reader it may be added, that in the Mithras-cult (always performed in the most rigid privacy and seclusion of a subterranean *spelaeum*, σπηλαῖον, cave) there were seven degrees. The first three

[1] The Phrygian Great Mother: "Tu Dindymenes Atteosque antistitem teletis honoras taureis consors pius."

[2] *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, VI, 1780.

[3] Roscher, *Lexikon der Myth.*, s.v. *Mithras*, column 3066.

were of those who merely served: *Corax*, *gryphus*, *miles*; the other four were participants (οἱ μετέχοντες): *Leo*, *Perses*, *Heliodromus*, *Pater*, this last one being the real priest and celebrant. As Tertullian wrote in his day[1]: "If I still remember the Mithras, he [the *pater*] there marks his own 'soldiers' on their foreheads; he celebrates also the oblation of bread [as a parallel of the Eucharist] and he introduces an image of the resurrection," etc. Eternal life or a rebirth into eternal life is expressedly named in some of the Mithras records of Roman aristocrats of this last epoch. So this one[2] of the year 376 A.D., under the three Christian emperors, Valentinianus, Valens, and young Gratian, son of the first named.

To the Great Gods, the Mother of the Gods, and to Attis, Sextilius Agesilaus Aedesius, V.C. [*vir clarus*, something like the modern "Honourable"], not an ignoble pleader of cases coming before the tribunal of [the province of] Africa, and in the audience chamber of the Emperor, likewise Master of Petitions and Investigations of their Majesties, Master of Letters, Master of Record, Vicar of Prefects in the Spanish provinces, *Pater Patrum* [chief priest of the Sol Invictus Mithras], Hierophant of Hecate, Archibucolus [chief herdsman] of the god Liber, *born again for eternity through* Taurobolium and Criobolium [slaying of steer and of ram].

On the Christian side there is preserved for us a curious document of these or slightly later times, a poem of polemics, written in hexameters[3], and directly addressed to, or aimed at, the pagan worshippers at Rome. After pointing to the moral obliquity of myths like those of Leda, Danae, etc., the author refers to the

[1] *De Praescriptionibus Haereticorum*, 40.

[2] Orelli, No. 2352.

[3] The so-called *Carmen Parisinum*, Latin Codex 8084 in the National Library at Paris. I used Mommsen's edition, *Hermes*, vol. IV, 1870, pp. 354–358.

Adonis-cult as then going on (v. 19). How can such cult bring salvation to Rome? Mommsen considers the time to have been this epoch which we are here considering, viz. that of Praetextatus, Symmachus, Flavianus; in fact, Symmachus is named outright (in v. 114) as a leader of the cult. Again we see that Sarapis and Isis were much resorted to, and that senators (v. 106) attended the chariot of turret-crowned Kybele, on the days of the Megalensian games, in the earlier part of April[1], when the castrated Attis was proclaimed to be the same as the Sun.

But we now must turn to a Roman aristocrat whose letters we have; I mean Symmachus. His supreme effort in 384 to secure imperial recognition, or at least toleration, for the old order brought the whole movement to a certain crisis. Symmachus lived from about 345 to 405, from Constantius to Honorius. Classical historians and other classicists, whose sympathies are often enlisted *a priori* in any one or in anything which maintains or even seems to maintain these interests, have somewhat unctuously pencilled phrases like this, that, "the heart of Symmachus was attached to the *faith of the fathers*"—an abuse of terms. It is true, on the other hand, that Symmachus and his coterie were convinced that the power, the integrity, the continued existence of the Roman Empire was, somehow, bound up with the preservation or the restoration of the older Roman rites and ritual. It was the fateful period, when Goths on Danube and Franks on Rhine were sorely besetting the Empire. The letters of this protagonist among the Old Believers were, it seems, preserved by his son Q. Aurelius Symmachus, for in those circles,

[1] Ovid, *Fasti*, IV, 179 sqq.

perhaps even by an Augustine, Symmachus was reputed a veritable Cicero redivivus.

Speaking soberly, I have no hesitation in saying that Erasmus, the humanist, vastly outranks this weak epigone of classic Latinism as a writer even, let alone as a thinker or controversialist. Weak, then, though he was in the work of his pen, I mean, a certain consistency and positive energy he certainly evinced in his sincere character of an Old Believer. His letters then permit a closer vision of what a Roman senator of the foremost rank then was: He had villas at Bauli on the gulf of Naples and on the Lucrinian lake, at Baiae; he had a seat also at Cora in the Volscian hills, at Formiae on the sea, a mansion at Capua, a country place in the cool hill country near Praeneste, a suburban villa near the Appian Way, while his city mansion was in the Caelian quarter. Heavy imperial taxes lay on him as a great landholder; still another of his numberless villas was beyond the Tiber in the Vatican district, another near Lavinium; besides these he had lands in Sicily and in the province of Mauretania. His father-in-law Orfitus had twice been *praefectus urbi*; his own father had held high office. He himself enjoyed such preferments under Valentinian I, under Gratian, nay, under Theodosius himself. His chief concern in the administration of the old capital is the grain supply[1]. Of almost equal importance for him is it to secure race horses from Spain, for his son's praetorian games, or leopards, bears, even crocodiles, for the sports and shows of the amphitheatre[2]. While Rome is still called "the common head of the nations," we observe that the actual resi-

[1] "Annona," III, 55, 82; V, 47; VII, 38; IX, 124.
[2] IV, 8; V, 62; VI, 41, 43; VII, 4, 7; IX, 16–27.

dence of the emperors generally is at Milan or Treves. Once Symmachus refers to a bishop, Severus, with consummate courtesy[1]. On the great issues of the times these letters touch but rarely, matters such as the steadily rising danger from the Goths. I have discovered one notable judgment concerning Theodosius: "He has a way of his own critically to examine his own men and to practise a conscription of character and ever to weigh individuals as though he met them for the first time, nor to forfeit his judgment to habit" (III, 81).

So much for the outward setting. Now for the chief concern in our present study, references to the old rites and religion, an epoch, may I repeat, which also was that of Ambrose, of Jerome, of Augustine. I have space but for a few of the significant data, which I have culled from his letters. His correspondents in each case fairly shared his sentiments and convictions. The aristocrats at Beneventum in great part worship the gods[2]. "Pythagoras, who first asserted the immortality of souls, Plato, who convinced [the world] that gods are" (I, 4). "It is agreed among the public priests, that we should surrender the concern of the gods into the custody of the citizens, coupled with public obedience [of the same]. *For the kindliness of a higher Being, unless it is held by worship, is lost*" (I, 46). "I am prevented by the duties of my pontifical office" (I, 48). "I am exceedingly distressed at the fact, that the *ostentum* of Spoletum is not yet effectively atoned for [*piatur*] by manifold sacrifices and those often repeated in going through the divine powers [gods] one at a time, nor as

[1] "Fratrem meum Severum episcopum omnium sectarum attestatione laudabilem" (VII, 51).

[2] I, 3.

yet officially on behalf of the state, for *Jupiter* was not propitiated by the eighth victim and to *Fortuna Publica* in a series of manifold victims the eleventh honour was performed" (I, 49, a letter to Praetextatus, hierophant of all cults). "You may marvel, perhaps, that I speak favourably of a bishop; it is his case, not his church, that has influenced me here" (I, 64). "Ye paternal gods, have mercy on your neglected rites! Drive away wretched famine! *May our city as soon as possible call back* [the gods] *whom she* sent away against her will!"

His correspondent here is Flavianus, his cousin, unexcelled in devotion to the old order[1], at this very time (383 A.D.) head of the chancellery of a Christian emperor. "I thought you were arranging for your return, because the religious celebration of the Mother of the Gods was near at hand!"—to the same correspondent (II, 34). "Now I am returning home on account of the festival of the Vestals" (IV, 59). He even calls Flavianus his *alter ego*[2], and "ruler of my heart" (III, 86). With a sigh he alludes to the fact that the Sibyl of Cumae is gone, that Dodona and Delphi are mute[3]. The lapse from virtue of a Vestal, Primigenia, has greatly stirred him and his pontifical colleagues. The sanctuary of the Vestals at that time seems to have been transferred by the Old Believers from the Forum to Alba, and their duty now is to look after the *Sacra Albana*. He calls for the extreme penalties even of the ancient code. He has reported the matter to the prefect of the city[4]. We know neither the correspondent nor the actual outcome of the scandal. The times indeed are evil: "At the present times for Romans to be absent

[1] II, 7.
[2] "Ambo idem sumus" (III, 66).
[3] IV, 33.
[4] IX, 147–148.

from the altars is a form of getting on in the world" (Nunc aris deesse Romanos genus est ambiendi, I, 51).

It was in this Rome, then, which Jerome (and St Peter before him) called Babylon[1], curiously confirming the judgment of Ammian cited above—it was in the Rome of 384 A.D. that both Damasus, the Bishop of Rome, and Praetextatus, hierophant of pagan cults and Neoplatonist likewise among the Roman aristocracy, lived and died. It was in this year 384 that Symmachus presented the official, or quasi-official, request to the boy Emperor, Valentinian II, to permit the replacing of the Altar of Victory. It was but six years since the Goths had inflicted on the Emperor Valens the crushing defeat of Adrianople, 378. Thoughtful men began to ask themselves, whether the Empire would endure or could endure. In the preceding year, 383 A.D., the young Emperor Gratian, an earnest devotee of the Christian faith, had perished at Lyons, a victim of the usurper Maximus. And Theodosius, occupied with the East, was by no means able at once to suppress the pretender. Symmachus claims to speak for the Senate as a whole in giving vent to a grievance long felt and long nursed; he claims to be the Senate's deputy in this matter. He demands outright the restoration of the old religion, "which long was beneficial to the commonwealth." There was, he urges, no political precedent for religious disestablishment. The name Victory certainly should receive honour, which now was denied to that deity. The emperors certainly needed victory. Everyone indeed did. The presence of that altar, indeed, was essential for the taking of loyal oaths.

We hear the Neoplatonist: "Everything is filled with

[1] Neander, transl. by Torrey.

the deity nor is any spot safe for treacherous men; but it is of very great importance, as bearing on the fear of wrongdoing, to be forcefully influenced [*urgueri*], even by the *presence*[1] *of the deity*." He cites the moderation of Constantine, to which we referred above, in dealing with the old Roman religious institutions. "Each has his own custom, his own rite; the mind of the deity has allotted various forms of worship as guardians for civil communities." As individuals had allotted to them a tutelary spirit or *genius*, so likewise had nations. It was this worship, he claimed, which eventually subjected the Mediterranean world to Rome. All were under the same heaven, under the same constellations; what did it matter[2] by what route men aspired to the appreciation of the same mystery? Why not restore the state appropriation for the Vestal Virgins? No longer were bequests of funds or lands for their establishment recognized. This decree should be cancelled. Even freedmen, even slaves enjoyed such privileges. A dearth of grain had followed this; it was the reply of the gods[3]. People had had to feed on acorns or dig for miserable roots; Valentinian and Gratian in heaven would be gratified to have the appropriations restored.

The young sovereign to whom this famous *Relatio* was directly addressed, Valentinian II, was then but thirteen years old; his mother, the Empress-dowager Justina, a fanatical Arian, was bitterly hostile to Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, in which city the court then generally resided. And it was Ambrose, who made

[1] Clearly he means the *simulacrum*, or cult-figure—precisely the conception of Porphyry and Iamblichus.

[2] The essence of deism also, long before Shaftesbury, Gibbon or Leslie Stephen.

[3] "Sacrilegio annus exaruit."

reply to the Old Believers[1]. At once he denied, categorically, that one could classify and place the God of positive Christian revelation in one group with the figments of pagan idolatry. A Christian emperor cannot restore pagan altars. How can they complain of appropriations, whose forbears slew the martyrs and destroyed the churches of the Christians? Gratian had summarily forbidden pagan worship. Now the pagan leaders were taking advantage of Valentinian II's tender years. Further, Ambrose claimed that the pagan senators were not at all a majority of that body, but the Christians were[2]. To swear by a name meant recognizing the divinity of the power named. A few pagan senators were really usurping the general name[3]. The Bishop Damasus had indeed forwarded a counter-petition of the Christian senators, innumerable ones, protesting against the document of Symmachus. The imperial youth should at least submit the entire matter to the senior Emperor Theodosius in the East. The church could not consent to a governmental compromise between the Old and the Christian religion. Should not the decrees of Valentinian's slain brother Gratian stand? No Christian senator should be compelled to witness, or to be present at, pagan rites. Let not young Valentinian listen to the fine sentences of the Petition. "They talk of 'God,' but it is an idol they worship[4]." The lucid and forceful arguments of Ambrose we need not marshal in detail[5].

[1] *Epistles* 17, 18, 57.

[2] Gibbon here betrays his sympathy with Symmachus in a characteristic manner.

[3] "Pauci gentiles communi utuntur nomine" (Ambrose, *Ep.* 17, 10).

[4] "Deum loquuntur: simulacrum adorant" (*Ep.* 18, 2).

[5] More than twenty years later the Spanish Christian poet Prudentius reproduced them in verse.

Did any pagan emperor raise any altar to Christ? We learn also[1] that the *rights* of temples have long been done away with. Only one point more from Ambrose's rejoinder: Ancient *Roman* religious rites[2]? Good; but how about the cult of idols of subject countries, of the Phrygian Mother, of the celestial goddess of Carthage, of Mithras[3]?

As Symmachus in the West pleaded with the Christian Emperor at Milan, so Libanius at Antioch appealed to Theodosius at Constantinople[4], "for the temples." The pompous and fervid publicist of the Orontes was now well advanced in years, several decades had gone by since the ideal and hope of his life, the Emperor Julian, had suddenly perished in Mesopotamia. What has Libanius to say to Theodosius? Primitive men, recognizing the benefactions coming to them from above, made cult-figures for themselves. These really were pilots of life. Rome so benefited, defeating her enemies and conferring blessings (*sic*) on the subjected nations. Why did Constantine change his religion? He became convinced that it was advantageous for himself to believe in some other god. Later on he used the treasures of Roman temples to build up Constantinople. Still he did not in the slightest degree prohibit the practice of the established Roman ritual. The fanes, indeed, were impoverished, but worship one could see fully practised (πληρούμενα). Then came Constantius —Libanius *names* neither him nor his father outright; the eunuchs really ruled for him. It was they who made him forbid the sacrifices. Next came one (Julian, also unnamed) who restored the sacrifices. Valentinian and

[1] *Ep.* 18, 21. [2] *Ep.* 32.

[3] Section 33 is full of problems.

[4] Sievers, *Libanius*, Hamburg, 1868, p. 192, argues for 388–391; Foerster, the editor of Libanius, favours a somewhat earlier date.

Valens, while forbidding the rest, allowed the use of *incense*. Theodosius confirmed this. But now came a plague of "fellows in black garb" (monks) of whom Libanius speaks with bitter contempt, men with ascetic pretensions, their visages cadaverous and pale. They fairly charged upon the pagan temples with wood and stones and iron bars; roofs were destroyed, walls demolished, cult-figures pulled down.

Now the fields got their fertility, Libanius goes on, from the ancient worship for all the generations. The tillers were discouraged, for fertility was cut off with the worship of the gods who produce the crops; the peasants now are deprived of the gods who reward their toil. The temple lands are appropriated, while the monks claim to worship their god by fasting[1]. In vain do the pagan sufferers present their complaints to the Christian bishops. The pagan country folk have withdrawn from the temples to domestic feasts, using no altar. The aged and the little children had often been severely dealt with. At Beroea (not the Macedonian, but situated between Antioch and Hierapolis) there was a very famous cult-figure of Aesculapius, in bronze, really a renowned portrait-statue of Alcibiades of Athens, fair and comely beyond words, an exquisite work of art, ascribed to the great Pheidias himself[2], now cut up and carried away piecemeal for the metal. Nobody (Libanius urges) had sacrificed to it. Now it is lost to that city forever. No demolition was ordained by the imperial edict.

The old pagan publicist speaks with scorn of Christian preachers who but a short time ago have quit bellows and anvil, and now undertake to discourse of Heaven and the basic powers thereof. What god did

[1] C. 10.

[2] Quite unlikely on chronological grounds.

the Romans follow in building up their Empire? Certainly not that of the Christians. Trojan War, Marathon, Salamis—the favour of specific gods caused these glories of the Hellenic world. Now the strength of the Empire and its integrity depend on the old-time sacrifices. The greater bounties must come from the gods of Rome, minor ones from the rural deities. And then the Egyptian cult of Serapis[1]; "the honours of the Nile"—let the river enjoy the ancient statutes for his customary fee. The interdependence of worship and of the periodic fertilization is here stated with a naïve dogmatism that is startling to us. Libanius is still, as it were, trembling with anger at Constantine (unnamed), despoiler of temples; but to him, as the pagan writer claims, came the retribution of the gods, in the blood shed by himself, of his wife Fausta, of his son Crispus. Under Constantius many temples were actually demolished, sometimes with infinite toil; he gave temples to favourites, as one might make a present of dogs or slaves or horses or a golden cup, while Constantius was in a tremor all through his reign at the Parthian danger. As for Julian, that heroic figure, he would have destroyed the Parthian Empire, had he not perished by treason like Achilles, for he, too, purchased immortal fame by his life (*τῆς ψυχῆς ἐπρίατο τὸ κλέος*, Ch. 40).

Temples, next to royal palaces, are the chief ornaments of cities; they still, even now, are grand edifices, even when deprived of religious function, are they not? Theodosius himself, Libanius claims, is surrounded by false friends; he is imposed upon by an evil counsellor, who in turn is a slave and puppet of his own wife. Pagans, Libanius adds, still hold high office under

[1] 35.

Theodosius[1], and live at court. You do not hound us, as Julian did not hound the Christians; why then these appropriations of lands? When Libanius alluded to an exemption by Theodosius of some kind of Serapis worship at Alexandria it is difficult for us, in our remoteness, to understand him. The account of the last struggles of the Old Believers in the capital of Egypt is preserved for us by the church historian Socrates[2]. It was in 389 A.D. The Bishop of Alexandria, Theophilus, secured from Theodosius an edict to destroy the Greek temple (the Serapeum) there. He also caused to be mimicked in public the mysteries of Mithras and the worship of Serapis. By this there was caused a riot of "the Greeks"; there was bloodshed on the streets; more Christians than Greeks were slain; the wounded were countless. The "Greeks" began to fear the wrath of Theodosius and went into hiding; many fled to other towns. One of the leaders, a literature teacher, was said to have been a priest of Zeus; another, Ammonius, to have been a priest of the baboon-god. Some of the cult-figures were melted up and recast into basins and other utensils serviceable for Christian worship. The Bishop, however, with deliberate design, preserved one agalma (cult-figure) in order that the "Greeks" in the course of time should not be able to deny that they had actually worshipped such "gods[3]."

[1] 53.

[2] *Hist. Eccles.* v, 16. Socrates by deep conviction was opposed to flattery either of bishops or of emperors. Details of the bloody riot at Alexandria Socrates heard from so good an authority as Helladius himself, who migrated to Constantinople and eventually taught Socrates himself there.

[3] Cf. the general relation of Sozomenus, *H. E.* VII, 22; Socrates, *H. E.* V, 25.

Theodosius in a way was the last of the Roman emperors; I mean last, indeed (and so, at least, relatively great), in his efforts to inhibit the irresistible disintegration of the Empire. And in this strainful and desperate task his last achievement was the overthrow and destruction of Arbogast, the Frank, who had set up the rhetor Eugenius in the West, after having young Valentinian strangled at Vienne on the Rhone, in 392. For a while Eugenius even gained control of Italy, and Flavianus, one of the most eminent and fervid of the Old Believers, even accepted consular honours at the hand of the tyrant, convinced by his pagan divination that Eugenius was to prevail over the Christian Theodosius. On the Frigidus river (the Wippach) as Theodosius and his army issued from the Julian Alps (the Isonzo country of the recent war), on the second day only of the conflict (September 6, 394 A.D.), after desperate reverses on the first, Theodosius gained a decisive victory[1]. Flavianus himself, after having fought for Jupiter and Mithras, died by his own hand. The usurper Eugenius, though outwardly a Christian himself, had, for political reasons, favoured the Old Believers among the Roman aristocracy[2], and so, too, the Altar of Victory had been brought back to its old place, and Flavianus in every way had striven to restore the Roman rites. He had been convinced from vaticination and the lore of the haruspices that Eugenius would prove victorious.

Ambrose[3], returned to Milan, considered the battle

[1] Cf. Articles *Arbogastes*, *Flavianus*, no. 14, in Wissowa's *Real-encyclopaedie*; also Mommsen in *Hermes*, IV, 362. There was also a widespread belief among the pagans that the Christian religion was to come to an end 365 years after its inception in 29 A.D.

[2] Neander-Torrey, II, 78. Sozomenus, VII, 22.

[3] *Epistles*, 61, 3.

on the Frigidus as decisive for the rehabilitation of the Christian order. For the victorious Emperor Theodosius it was a political necessity to visit Rome in that autumn. The only details of that visit are preserved for us by Zosimus, the Byzantine historian, whose deep hatred of Christianity is familiar to all students of this period, and whose spirit here is abundantly revealed, as of one in whom the aspirations and sympathies of the Old Believers were curiously maintained—curiously, we say, when we consider that he wrote more than a full century after these events; there is indeed no tenacity like this kind of tenacity[1].

Theodosius was almost a sexagenarian. He wished to settle things both in politics and religion, then, as often, deeply fused or interdependent. His younger son, Honorius, then ten years old, was to be emperor of the West, under the guidance of the German Stilicho, who was married to Serena, niece of Theodosius. At Rome, Theodosius also addressed the Senate and appealed to them to abandon their errors and to "choose the faith of the Christians, the promise of which was relief from all sin and all impiety" (Zosimus, IV, 59). Zosimus indeed asserts that none heeded this appeal, as they clung to the traditions of those by whom Rome was founded; for nearly twelve hundred years they had dwelt in a city never sacked (*sic*); if they exchanged other rites for these, they did not know what the result would be. Thereupon Theodosius declared that the treasury was (unduly) burdened with the expense of rites and sacrifices; the military chest had urgent needs. The Old Believers insisted that the rites, to be proper (that is, to be institutional), must be made from the

[1] Zosimus, IV, 59.

public funds. It was due to the discontinuance or neglect of the ancestral rites that the Roman Empire had been cut short and become an abode of the barbarians.

Little doubt but that Zosimus injected into this narrative, somewhat subjectively, I believe, the coming shadow of Alaric and the catastrophe of the Empire. It would be quite foolish to accept from so partisan a writer the bald affirmation, that the Senate in the age of Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine, was still solidly and substantially pagan.

NOTE. Jerome's letter No. 23, impressively contrasts the death of a Roman Christian leader of the aristocracy with the recent demise of Agorius Praetextatus, *consul designatus*, who died in the same year, the critical year 384. I must not forbear to transcribe a passage from that letter of Jerome: "Ille, quem ante paucos dies dignitatum omnium culmina praecedebant, qui, quasi de subjectis hostibus triumpharet, Capitolinas ascendit arces, quem plausu quodam et tripudio populus Romanus excepit, *ad cuius interitum urbs universa commota est*: non in lacteo caeli palatio, ut uxor mentitur infelix, sed in sordentibus tenebris continetur."

CHAPTER X

THE EARLIER STAGES OF AUGUSTINE

"PAGAN-CHRISTIAN," "a pagan world," "a Christian world," "Greco-Roman civilization," "the reaction under Julian"—and many large and comprehensive terms are often uttered by men in academic chairs, in pulpits, in manuals, and elsewhere, and very often without any firm grasp on the infinite and elusive mass of concrete facts, forces or trends hidden under or meant by those large and sweeping expressions. For any survey of The Contact and Conflict of Classic Paganism with Christianity, Augustine of Tagaste may well be selected not only as one of the great figures in the entire movement of European and Christian history, but as that personality (typical of many others) which passed through almost every spiritual influence or aspiration then rife in the Western Empire. His life and extraordinary career coincide also with the irresistible disintegration of that empire; for, born before the Emperor Julian's public apostasy, he was a contemporary of the Gothic times of Alaric, and breathed his last as the Vandals were surging around the walls of his own episcopal town of Hippo, in August, 430 B.C.[1]

[1] A recent book on Augustine is one by a former Roman Catholic priest, Joseph McCabe, published in 1902, when the author was thirty-five years old, *Augustine and his Times*, dedicated to Leslie Stephen, a book with the hall mark of positivism everywhere in evidence, designed (p. 18) to be a "psychological story," which the youthful ex-priest confidently believes will adequately explain the religious and personal life history of Augustine. In the latter's

To specify our present design: It is not to consider that Augustine of Tagaste, who for a long period dominated Christian theology, but the seeker after God in his earlier stages, mainly in his pre-baptismal period. Nor shall we dwell much on his Manichaean period. It is the brilliant and gifted rhetor, pupil of Cicero, admirer of Plotinus, possessed of a rare *ingenium*, in which intense emotions were curiously coupled with, nay fused with, the keenest dialectical faculty and a rare endowment for trenchant and exhaustive analysis—it is this Roman of Africa, we say, who, beginning in the subsidiary profession of *grammaticus* at Tagaste, then became *rhetor* at Carthage, and later practised his profession at Rome and at Milan, and who at one time entertained fond hopes of marrying a well-dowered spouse and being appointed governor of a province in the *Occidens* of the Empire. Symmachus at Rome did not draw him into the cult of the Old Believers, nor can we say that Ambrose at Milan really caused his final and definite acceptance of Christ and Christianity. But I must not anticipate his own delineation, his own, for really there is no other.

earnest seeking after God, McCabe sees merely a "Sisyphean task" (p. 67). Our psychological analyst, very modestly, will tell us others what part of the Confessions to accept and what to reject. Evidently he has been intellectually irritated by much of what he read in Augustine. This work, however, is abundantly characterized by some of McCabe's own confessions: "Be it God or Nature or the World-Soul, that grows through the Ages, that inspires those views of man's life which *we* [*i.e.* the fervid and cocksure agnostics] call religions [note the plural], this much is certain, they improve from age to age" (p. 99). I close the notice of this book with this modest pronouncement: "Now we are all Epicureans; only some of us [the Christians, I suppose] trust to extend our Epicureanism into a coming life as well as this" (p. 130). The former priest's sympathies are not merely positivistic, but frankly pro-pagan.

The aim of the present chapter is, to sketch this extraordinary man in that part of his striving and career in which his pre-Scriptural history is revealed to us, together with his equipment and perspective, nay, his very consciousness, during that period. I shall not even retrace all the main data of his life from his birth, November 13, 354 A.D., to Easter, 387, when he was baptized at Milan. Nor shall I dwell on the *ingenium* of his father Patricius, who died in 370–71 in Tagaste, whose influence upon young Augustine seems to have been *nil*, or describe his mother Monica, whose maternal and spiritual affection and aspiration the wonderful pen of her great son has fixed, *aere perennius*, for us and for all time. Now what were his culture and his ideals in his earlier life? We must not forget, that his Confessions were written at a period much more mature, when Christian faith had long been sovereign in his soul, when to his severe spiritual standards and vision much of his earlier life was rated as mere apples of Sodom. But there is no Minerva-process of sudden and unheralded consummation and completeness in the life history even of the most uncommon souls. With the *grammaticus*[1] he was a pupil of excellent promise; the wanderings of Aeneas, the sorrows of Dido, the Wooden Horse before Troy, the Shadow of Creüsa, deeply absorbed him; Vergil, in a word, loomed large then. Even then the gifted boy formed the habit of self-communion and introspection, of measuring his inner being, its powers and its limitations; he realized even then how little, in the tasks of acquisition, *fear* achieved, how much the genuine desire to know. Greek he keenly

[1] Which was not the elementary course in language and letters. *Confessiones*, I, 20.

disliked; it was so utterly un-related to his own Latin speech, and further it was so difficult, this lexical bitterness outweighing all the charms of the Greek legends[1]. He failed not to learn of the amours of Zeus, thunder-god though he be[2].

At sixteen he returned home from the grammaticus school at Madaura, and for a whole year remained at home in Tagaste; his folk accumulating and saving, that he, in the regular progression of work then established, might take up work with a rhetor in the capital of the Province, Carthage. Of his lapses, temptations, and illicit association there with a regular mistress he has told all, also of his passion for the theatre. His interest in Christianity or Christian worship then was of the slightest. Soon he fell under the influence of the Manichaean cult, whose founder, Mani of Persia, was reported a newer and greater redeemer, the Paraclete indeed, promised in John xiv, 16. This sect also had a kind of baptism, a kind of Eucharist, and a kind of Good Friday to celebrate the crucifixion of Mani (victim of Parsee priests, 276–277 A.D.); also there was in the system a Judgment and a Purgatory. In the life of the young aspirant for fame and secular distinction, there was always also a curious counterpoise; I mean a strong and deep yearning for an intellectual, rather, spiritual fundament of life and hope, and all this, curiously enough, while he was firmly held in the bonds of sexual passion. In the Manichaean cult and doctrine the definiteness and certitude of the two great and dominant

[1] *Op. cit.* I, 23.

[2] "Fingebat haec Homerus, et humana ad deos transferebat: divina mallem ad nos" (*Conf.* I, 25)—really a reminiscence from Cicero, *Tusculan Disputat.* I, 65. One of their chief tasks was to furnish a prose paraphrase of Vergil.

forces, Light and Darkness, impressed him profoundly —these, too, as personal beings, but essentially material. Or in this wise: Earth and Air; while Light was the good principle—physical force too—and, for the Supreme Being, limited and devoid of two very essential properties, ubiquity and omnipotence[1]. As for the Manichaeans' claim, that the New Testament was falsified by fusing with the Jewish Law, this was merely a reassertion of one of the theses in Marcion's Gnosticism.

But let us turn to the deeper trend of his inner history. The regular course under the rhetor, after the *progymnasmata* and *suasoriae*, took up, quite solidly, the special study of argumentation, and, as a very essential propaedeutic of this, philosophy—a survey of the great schools, logic, ethics; all this generally began with the famous hortatory discourse of Cicero, the *Hortensius*, now lost[2]. Augustine was then in his nineteenth year (373 A.D.), and already the father of the infant called by him Adeodatus. As Luther dated the initial point of his greater life history from the discovery of the chained Vulgate Bible at Erfurt, so Augustine always rated the influence of the *Hortensius* as paramount, decisive, tremendous. The transcendental life of the blessed, Cicero had there said, was certain not to have courts, or litigation or any contention, but the highest attainments of the soul would there be realized as well as its deepest satisfaction in knowledge and insight. But we must let Augustine tell of his experience in his soul history.

[1] *Conf.* v, 20.

[2] It seems to have been really a cyclopaedic treatise. There are some ninety citations in Baiter's edition, and the most substantial ones are found in the works of Augustine himself.

I had reached [in the regular course] a certain work of a certain Cicero, whose tongue pretty nearly every one admires—not so his inner personality.... That book indeed changed the trend of my emotions.... Cheapened suddenly for me was all futile hope, and I craved the immortality of Wisdom with an incredible glow of my heart, and I began to rise in order to return to Thee. For not to sharpen my tongue—a thing which I seemed to be purchasing with the fees furnished by my mother—when I was in my nineteenth year, my father having died two years before....

God and the soul even then seem to have been the chief objects of the new powers that were so deeply stirred within him. At this point we must note two things. Apart from Monica's sacrifices to make possible his professional training, to become a rhetor, there was also a townsman of young Augustine, Romanianus of Tagaste, a man of abundant wealth[1] (not a member of the Christian church even in 387 A.D.), whose son Licentius some eleven to twelve years later was committed to the care and training of the accomplished rhetor Augustine.

You took me up, when I was a poor young fellow going on to study away from home and sustained me with home and allowance, and, what is more, with cordial good-will. You, when I had lost my father, consoled me with friendship, enlivened me with cheer, aided me with material resources. You, in our very town, through favour and intimacy, nay through sharing your own home with me, made me almost as distinguished as you were, and put me in the front rank [*Acad.* II, 3].

So, too, at Carthage, and this benefactor did not withdraw his countenance when Augustine, rather impetuously and suddenly, later on, determined to leave the province and establish himself as a professor in Rome itself. This is one matter worthy of our careful attention. The other, I believe, is this: I doubt whether

[1] *Contra Academicos*, I, 1.

Cicero's *Hortensius* did make or create that trend in the future rhetor, which in time dominated and determined an extraordinary career; the disposition and deep endowment was in the youth before. Thousands had read the *Hortensius* before him, but here was that deeper affinity, which atavism and other similar modern conveniences cannot explain at all, with all their self-sufficiency and confident pretensions.

As for the Bible, it impressed Augustine then as plain and poor and unworthy of comparison with Cicero. He competed successfully for public prizes and wreaths, some of these efforts being in verse and delivered in the largest auditorium of that provincial capital, the theatre of Carthage, when the victor's crown was bestowed by the proconsul in person[1]. At this time, when he had already opened his own school, he was for a time under the ban of astrological beliefs, as though men's actions were determined by the planets. It was a common practice, also, to use a line of Vergil selected by luck or by lot, as an oracle for the guidance of life. After Augustine had for some years conducted his own school of eloquence at Carthage, he was fascinated by the reputation of Hierius, a Greek rhetor who came from Syria (Antioch, no doubt) to Rome and there through the Latin tongue had gained no smaller fame. It was to him that Augustine dedicated his treatise, *De Pulcro et Apto*[2], and, of course, he sent a copy to Hierius in Rome; little doubt he sought a stepping-stone to go to the capital himself and set up a school there. That monograph

[1] *Conf.* III, 9; IV, 5.

[2] Cicero, *De Oratore*, III, 53: "Quod ego *aptum et congruens* nomino." *Orator*, 70: "Quid *deceat*, videre; πρέπον appellant hoc Graeci; nos dicamus sane *decorum*." Quintilian, XI, 1: "Ut dicamus apte." Cf. Aristotle, *Rhet.* III, 7.

was his first production, and he loved it as authors and other fathers love their first-born. By himself, also, he traversed the entire cycle of the so-called liberal arts[1]. Alone, also, he studied the Ten Categories of Aristotle, and was delighted to realize that he mastered them quite as completely as those did who learned them from an expert teacher[2]. Mere thorns and thistles as yet, in his seeking after God. And this central theme, we begin to see, was not due to any speculative ambition, but he was indeed possessed by a consuming desire to gain a more than academic, a personal, positive, living, enduring relation to God, a striving in which Soul and God were conceived as correlatives, as the great subject and object, in verity, the two transcendent and sovereign concerns.

He sailed for Italy, deeply grieving for his mother who, widow as she was, now felt more bereaved than ever. At Rome (as yet associating privately with Manichaeans there) he expected to find the established demeanour of classes in the rhetors' schools more decorous and sedate than at Carthage. Still there were drawbacks, pupils having a way of leaving a school without paying their fee. Now Augustine at this juncture was favoured with a rare piece of preferment. An official or municipal rhetor was sought for Milan[3], then the real capital at least of *Occidens*. Symmachus himself, after the death of Praetextatus, the acknowledged head among the Old Believers, then *praefectus urbi*, nominated Augustine for this post, and the rhetor was

[1] *Conf.* IV, 23, 30. [2] *Conf.* IV, 28.

[3] Ausonius, the older contemporary of Augustine, enumerates the first eight cities of the Roman Empire in this order: Rome, Constantinople and Carthage, Antioch and Alexandria, Treves, Milan, Capua.

allowed state transportation. All this was late in 384 A.D. On New Year's day, before the consul Bauto, at Milan, the new professor delivered eulogy and thanks for the appointment. In his distinguished position Augustine came in contact with the élite of that great city as well as courtiers and heads of the bureaucracy.

He looked up, or called upon the Christian bishop of Milan, Ambrose[1], but his interest then was mainly technical and rhetorical; he desired to study the bishop's mode of homiletic delivery, being indifferent as yet, to the contents of those sermons. His impression was, that in oratory Ambrose was inferior to the Manichaean Faustus at Carthage, but gradually the spiritual import of the sermons began to find an opening in the soul of Augustine. He began to apply the sceptical principles of the academic school of Greek philosophy to the system of Mani, emancipating himself from it in the process; and there were other philosophies which he began to prefer to the pseudo-gospel of Mani. He was weary in mind and spirit. At this stage he became a catechumen of the Christian church. He was weary, too, of his profession; weary, also, and ill at ease about living with a mistress, out of wedlock. He himself reckoned this period of searching and unrest from his nineteenth year[2], some eleven years before. His forenoons he had to spend with his classes, and the mere consumption of physical effort with throat and chest was beginning to tell. He had to court influential patrons whose support he might need in case he sought

[1] *Conf.* v, 23.

[2] "Quibus tamen philosophis, quod sine nomine salutari Christi essent, curationem languoris animae meae committere omnino recusabam" (v, 25).

a final appointment as provincial governor[1]. He distrusted his powers of continence. As to making philosophy the chief aim of his further life, his friend Alypius insisted that Augustine could not succeed in such a plan amid the manifold obligations of the conjugal state. His mother, Monica, now presiding over his household, urged him to marry, and then, through baptism, cleanse himself from all the stains of the past[2]. His mistress of many years had returned to Africa, but Augustine had established another concubine, while having son and mother in the same household.

He was much engaged in fathoming the cause of evil (or sin). There was the fear of death and of the judgment to come. He began to read some Neoplatonic books, Plotinus, probably, and Porphyry, in a Latin version, but he found not there anything resembling the Incarnation of the Word, as in John i, 1. His earnest study of the Scriptures came somewhat later. As yet he had conceived of Jesus chiefly as a great and incomparable sage[3], but the mystery of the Incarnation was hidden from his mind. His Neoplatonic reading filled him with the conviction, that all truth was non-material, hence God, too, must needs be not only non-material, but also immutable as to essence, ever the same, infinite, but at the same time source of all finite being. Of course, the Neoplatonic books could not teach him Christian humility or prayer, he tells us. Later on he conceived this peculiar sequence of influences as regulated by the providence of Divine Grace. It was infinitely better—so he held later—that Neoplatonism came earlier, and

[1] *Praesidatus* (VI, 19). We must never lose sight of the fact, that the Confessions were a spiritual autobiography, not a general one.

[2] *Conf.* IV, 21; VI, 23.

[3] *Conf.* VII, 4, 13, 25.

Scriptural influences later, especially the writings of St Paul. He was greatly impressed, when he learned through conversation in Milan, that the eminent rhetor Marius Victorinus of Rome, commentator of Cicero and translator of Neoplatonic works, like himself a native of the province of Africa, had in his old age forsaken the cult of the Old Believers, who had distinguished him with high honours[1], had become a Christian, and had been publicly baptized in one of the chief basilicas in Rome. *Exarsi ad imitandum*[2].

And now he began to strive with great earnestness, to emancipate his soul from two things, concubinage and the mirage of secular ambition[3]. He also pondered deeply on the life history of St Anthony, the famous anchorite of the Egyptian Thebaid (b. 251 A.D.). He began to shiver at his own moral self-portraiture[4]; all the former arguments for, and ideals of, a worldly career and of terrestrial felicity began to shrink and shrivel in themselves and to vanish from his soul. What, after all, had he accomplished with all his learning and the deep searching and pondering of twelve years? It was on the country estate of his friend, the grammaticus Verecundus of Milan, probably in the long vacation, 386 A.D., to which he had removed his entire household, where occurred the spiritual catastrophe, by which he tells us was determined his conclusive consecration to spiritual things and the cause of Christ. This incident, it seems to me, is almost everywhere misrepresented as his very

[1] Jerome Chronology Abr. 2370-355 A.D.: "Victorinus rhetor et Donatus grammaticus praeceptor meus Romae insignes habentur. E quibus Victorinus etiam statuam in foro Traiani meruit."

[2] *Conf.* VIII, 5 sqq., 10.

[3] *Conf.* VIII, 13.

[4] "Constituebas me ante faciem meam, ut viderem, quam turpis essem" (*Conf.* VIII, 16).

conversion, as his definite acceptance of Christianity[1]. As a matter of fact, everything in his mind, in that vortex of aspirations, yearnings, reluctant reactions—in a word, all the soul-struggle of this rare man turned on the questions: Shall I discontinue concubinage for good and all? Shall I give up, for good and all, my long cherished designs and achievements leading to a great secular career? Have I spiritual strength to carry it through? Shall I take the step from which there cannot be any return? Now there could not be any serious preparation for baptism at Milan; if concubinage were to be maintained, such would have been an elemental denial of all that baptism involved, to say the least.

Thus, then, he had reached a summer's afternoon out there in the garden, deeply struggling. A cloud of witnesses, sainted men and women of all ages, seemed to beckon him on[2]. His bosom friend, Alypius, was speechlessly awaiting the outcome. Finally, Augustine, with a flood of tears, flung himself to the ground under a fig tree. It was then that he heard a child's voice from a neighbouring house repeating in a singsong voice, perhaps in some game, the words: *Tolle, lege! tolle, lege!* As the Old Believers often opened Vergil with divinatory intent, so Augustine opened the writings of St Paul[3], in which he had been reading, thinking that St Anthony once had proceeded in a similar fashion. As he opened the *codex*, his eyes lighted upon Romans xiii, 13: "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the

[1] Luther's entrance into the Monastery of Erfurt was even more catastrophic, more sudden.

[2] *Conf.* VIII, 27.

[3] *Codicem Apostoli* (*Conf.* VIII, 29).

flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." Alypius took for *his* oracular guidance, the very next line, Romans xiv, 1: "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations."

It was over. Augustine told his mother. No wife then; no worldly career. The catechumen had cleared his own soul. The public announcement that he was to resign from his municipal professorship Augustine put off to the autumn, when the season of the grape harvest provided a regular further vacation[1]. Physically, too, he was spent and overwrought; his throat and lungs needed a long rest. After the grape harvest, then, he formally vacated his chair as rhetor of Milan, and by letter informed the bishop, Ambrose, who advised him to read Isaiah. The following Easter, 387 A.D., he was baptized in Milan with his son, deeply impressed by the services, especially by noble hymns of Ambrose, which just then were beginning to enrich Christian Latin worship.

On these things, however, so often stated, we must not dwell. Our quest is to follow Augustine from this very point and before it, going back to the scene under the fig tree, to learn if we can what he occupied his mind and soul with in the fall and winter of 386–387. Nor must we illumine this page by any generalization, however convenient or alluring. It would seem that his old patron Romanianus of Tagaste, stood by him in that crisis of his affairs, and the latter's son Licentius then was, as a private pupil, a regular member of Augustine's household. The intensity of his pursuits in that curious blending of philosophical and theological concerns is brought home to us by the rapid sequence of

[1] *Conf.* IX, 2.

treatises he then composed. And let us state at once, he was then far from that self-confinement in Scripture, which, much later on, is manifest in his Confessions. Most of these were indeed written at the Cassiciacum: *Contra Academicos*, *De Vita Beata*, *De Ordine*, *Soliloquia* (attacked by some pseudo-critics as spurious), *De Immortalitate Animae*, *De Quantitate Animae*. Some of these were dialogues, in the Ciceronian manner; nay, some, it would seem, were genuine reproductions of his own didactic habits in his rhetor's classroom, viz. in the concrete training in argumentation with work or rôles actually assigned to his younger interlocutors, the heaviest thesis, of course, being carried and developed by himself.

The first of these works in that critical segment of his life was dedicated to Romanianus of Tagaste. With matchless fervour and eloquence, the retired rhetor sketches the ideals of worldly felicity as held in that generation[1], fleet and fragile—"quae me ipsum capere moliebantur quotidie ista cantantem[2]"—and he adds candidly that pulmonary ailments were his chief reason for abandoning his profession. Now he fled "into the lap" of philosophy[3]. A shorthand secretary was employed. Now what is wisdom? "The knowledge of human and divine things"—the classic definition of the past. Augustine is now, as though in a journey, looking back once more at concerns which his mother had so earnestly striven to implant in his soul when he was a

[1] *Contra Academicos*, I, 2.

[2] Which were working mightily to captivate me myself, who harped on them day by day.

[3] "Nisi me pectoris dolor ventosam professionem abicere et in philosophiae gremium confugere coegisset (*loc. cit.* 13). Little doubt but that Cicero's *Academica* prompted Augustine not a little.

child; he has now read St Paul through with supreme concentration and care[1]; also he has been making a recension of Vergil's *Aeneid* II–IV in the space of seven days, probably for a bookseller.

His chief concern now, I take it, is to rid himself of the last elements of Manichaeism. He has surveyed the theories of human understanding as developed by the Old and the New Academy; what really can we know? Now the Academy from Arkesilas and Carneades down limited their axioms to this, that we may attain the plausible[2], but nothing more positive. But Augustine craves more. To him the soul (*animus*) is a power, which expects (*praesumit*) that it will overcome the opposition of all deceptions, and, grasping the truth, *returning, as it were, into the realm of its own origin*[3], will triumph over appetites, and so, having received self-control like the mistress of her own household, will hold sway, destined to return to Heaven more free from concern. Augustine is not content with the sceptic and dubitative theses of the Academic philosophers, which remind him of the slippery and ever-changing Proteus of the Greek legends. With Cicero's guidance, Augustine rapidly surveys some of the schools of Greek thought: Stoics, Epicureans, Cynics, Plato. Is man really constitutionally incapable of determining the truth? Must one (with the Academics) stop short in the vestibule of wisdom? Now the very axioms of logic are indeed sound, no matter how unreliable and deceptive mere sense perception often may be. Augustine is not now writing for reputation, but to find truth[4]. The nega-

[1] *Conf.* II, 5.
[2] *Probabile.*
[3] His Neoplatonic reading is here reflected.
[4] *Conf.* II, 22; III, 13, 30.

tivism of the Academics is profoundly antipathetic to him now. Now wisdom must be sought (and found) in the concrete sphere of the *soul*: "If you will ask, where he will find wisdom itself, I shall answer: in himself" (*Conf.* III, 31). How futile that dogmatism of scepticism! It accomplishes nothing, it carries us nowhere—*Qui nihil approbat, nihil agit* (III, 33). Scepticism cannot lay down any canons for right living; but then these are axiomatically needed. "Surely not every one who is wrong in judgment, sins, but surely it is admitted, that every one who sins is wrong in judgment or something worse" (III, 35). Hence, scepticism cannot reprove wrong conduct. Augustine here cites, in illustration of his point, Catiline's speech in Sallust[1].

In these months and weeks after his great resolution, Augustine, the rhetor and classicist, the neophyte under Ambrose' guidance, appears still to have been greatly impressed with his Neoplatonic reading. All these things were influences, some of them antithetical and incongruous, without any positive clarity or definiteness as yet. As for Plotinus, Augustine says of him, that he resembled Plato so greatly, that, if one did not know, one might take them for contemporaries[2]. We can, then, Augustine urges, not merely strive for, we can attain to, truth. He says:

> I am at this time [autumn, 386 A.D.] a searcher for positive truth, *and my further life must be devoted to that pursuit*. Now there are two factors or sources of insight, *authority* and *reason*. As for me, I am determined, never at all to withdraw *from the authority of Christ, for I find no stronger* [authority]. But as for that which must be pursued with the most delicate *reason*—for I am now in such a frame of mind that I impatiently desire not only by believing, but also by understanding, to seize what

[1] *Catiline*, 20.

[2] *Conf.* III, 41.

truth is—meanwhile I shall, in the works of the Platonists[1], find that which is not antagonistic to our own [holy] religion [*Conf.* III, 43].

Now we may call this a program or a self-analysis or what we like; not much can by any exegesis be added to words so fervid, so earnest, and so lucid[2].

His dialogue On the Happy Life (*De Vita Beata*), or Perfect Life, is set down as spoken in the same country-seat and vineyard, the Cassiciacum of his friend Verecundus. The conversations begin on his thirty-second birthday, November 13, 386. This little work was dedicated to Manlius Theodorus (who, later on, under the feeble Honorius, in 399, achieved consular honours). This friend of Augustine does not seem to have been a Christian, at least not then; he was indeed a friend and correspondent of Symmachus himself. Perhaps he was father of a recent pupil of Augustine's. The retired rhetor here discourses with his mother and with his entire household, or family circle. There is his own son Adeodatus, Licentius, mentioned before and still his pupil, Taygetus, then his own brother Navigius, and two cousins. Wisdom now is the quest of the joint enquiry. Its greatest foe is worldly ambition, a pursuit both overweening and empty. Again Augustine records Cicero's *Hortensius* and his nineteenth year as the decisive point in the history of his inner life. Theodorus himself, to whom the treatise is inscribed, is a reader

[1] We now say *Neoplatonists*.

[2] In the *Retractationes* of his last years he withdraws the high valuation of Plotinus, even calling Plato and the Platonists *impii homines*, with the practical explanation thereof in the present tense: "Praesertim contra quorum errores magnos defendenda est Christiana doctrina" (*Retract.* I, 1, 4). I believe he has in mind here the buttressing of pagan idolatry so long practised—as by the Old Believers among the Roman aristocracy.

of Platonic books. What is the soul? What is God? Most men believe that conformity of life with one's tastes or aspirations constitutes happiness. But suppose that will or aspirations are not right or sound? Now, then, considering that God alone is immutable and eternal, happiness should be his who has God[1], or his who does what God wills, viz. that men should seek God. It must be an axiom of happiness. Only a clean conscience is qualified to seek Him. But the soul needs not barely God, in Himself, but a gracious God. Whoever has a gracious God is certainly happy. Therefore, any one who sins or yields to sin, cannot be happy. After all, then, happiness is a form of possession, unhappiness a form of want or privation.

Now, Augustine had found, in his Ciceronian reading[2], a certain very rich man, Sergius Aurata, a contemporary of Cicero's youth and earlier manhood, who could gratify any whim or desire—a type of the world's happiness, but still, fear or restless craving for still more will rob such a one of real happiness, for he is subject to many contingencies over which he has no control. His soul cannot be tranquil[3]. Want, or privation, in the case of the soul, is a form of folly or ignorance. There is no median line between this unhappiness and that happiness. Here folly and unhappiness are convertible terms; want is obviously a *negative* term; strictly speaking, one cannot *have* want. In the final analysis, we arrive at being and non-being. There is much weighing of terms and much defining of concepts in this treatise of Augustine. We see the rhetor at work, in a class of enquiring pupils, including his own mother, directing,

[1] *De Vita Beata*, 4, 17.
[2] Cicero, *De Finibus*, II, 70.
[3] Cf. the ἀταραξία of the Stoics.

suggesting, encouraging, inhibiting, advancing, summarizing. He even dwells on the etymology of related terms, such as *modestia*, *egestas*, *opulentia*. Wisdom is bound up with a certain equipoise of the soul, an avoidance of, or recession from, luxury, autocratic demeanour, pride. At the very conclusion only, a distinctly Christian thesis is uttered, viz. that Christ is the wisdom of God, and here he cites John xiv, 6: "Ego sum veritas." This great text he handles at once in a dialectical and analytical way: The highest measure is absolute and transcendent[1]. To God belongs all truth, even that which we attain before we come to Him. At this point Monica begins to intone the hymn of Ambrose: "Fove precantes, Trinitas."

Not long after this Augustine composed the treatise, *De Ordine*, on divine Providence[2], still sojourning at the Cassaciacum. He still refers to his recent physical prostration or exhaustion; his ailing throat and respiratory organs had indeed compelled him to discontinue his profession; he was giving at least one-half of every night to deep reflection. Great was his struggle with habits recently abandoned, and he declares himself as being still a mere tyro in philosophy[3]. Monica is strict in maintaining decorum on the part of the two resident pupils[4]. A *notarius* is again called into service. Alypius, his dear friend and fellow catechumen, has recently rejoined Augustine. The Ambrosian hymns are still a new joy in that household. Augustine still gives a daily lesson in Vergil, some half book each time. His own

[1] *De Vita Beata*, 20, 32, 34.

[2] "Nihil praeter divinum ordinem fieri" (*De Ordine*, II, 24).

[3] *De Ordine*, I, 5, 13.

[4] Licentius is composing a hexametrical poem on Pyramus and Thisbe. Cf. Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, IV, 55.

mental vision is still sore or defective. This, then, is a discourse on Providence, on the divine control of the world. It was the odd rhythm of gurgling sounds, as the water passed through certain ducts or pipes about the place, that suggested this theme to the mind of Augustine, while lying in bed. Thus, too, there is a series of causes in the life of men and of the world, a series due to regulation and design. Here, too, the rhetor is still on the same quest—seeking after God. As for *evils*, their specific design is that they are not loved by God; that is an inference by one of the juniors in this discourse. But how can the justice of God be adjusted to them?

> The wise man therefore embraces God and enjoys Him, the Being that always endures, and as to whom one does not look forward to His coming to be, *but through that very fact, that He truly is, is He always present* [II, 6].

All things are with God, associated with God. The service of God is not the result of a subjective reasoning process of man, but is bound up with the design of God. Augustine at this pre-baptismal stage (a little more than thirty-two years of age, on the threshold of a Christian career) even attempts to adjust vice to the general design of Divine Providence. *Authority* and *reason* are still the two great avenues leading to insight[1]. Unfortunately, the latter can appeal but to a very small number of men. Now true philosophy has no other occupation (*negotium*, II, 17) than to point out the first Cause that has no cause[2], from whom there came to us the reve-

[1] *De Ordine*, I, 18; II, 12, 16.

[2] Is this a mere coincidence with Aristotle? Cf. the summary in Bonitz's *Index Aristoteliens*, s.v. Metaphysics, XII, 7, p. 1072 a, 26. Augustine, *De Ordine*, II, 76: "Quod sit omnium principium sine principio."

lation of Christ for our salvation. We see, then, quite clearly, how personal analysis and quasi-metaphysical speculation were supremely active and dwelt in the mind of the rhetor side by side with the acceptance as of something definite and final, of the fundamental dogmas of the Christian church.

As for the problem of evil in the world-plan, he is puzzled (II, 23), but hopes that many difficulties will be explained further, when the soul of the enquirer reaches that point when it shall love nothing but God and the souls of men[1]. For conduct no less than thought must be directed toward the same goal. Then, without any further theological concern, he turns to examine the process of human understanding, confining himself purely to the domain of psychology. We, in this place, must content ourselves with merely touching upon the sequence of his chief topics. These are: The difference between *rational* and *reasonable*; the elements of the esthetic judgment, in the curious interdependence of the soul and senses; further spheres, in which the reasonable appears, viz. in the speech and cognate studies of men, in logic and rhetoric, in music and poetry and mathematics. Now all of these, conjointly, should be put into the service of the quest after God. The influence of his Neoplatonic reading is constantly revealed; the origin of the soul is from God[2]. These two, God and the soul, are the two sovereign quests, with which our highest happiness is bound up.

Augustine here holds to, or asserts, the "two worlds," *i.e.* the *intelligible* and the *material* world, quite in the Platonic manner; further, "the Father of the universe,

[1] An ideal on which no reader of this book can ponder too much.

[2] *De Ordine*, II, 23; I, 25; II, 32, 33, 44, 47.

of whom there is no knowledge in the soul, except how it does not know Him." Then, *the One*[1]. And, as he for whom a house is built, is better than that house, so, too, the soul is superior to the material world in which it dwells. Reason is eternal and immortal, man likewise. He must flee from his material and transitory shell to his primeval and immortal essence, to see God indeed, fairness itself, order itself, in that intelligible world. His mother's prayers are now coming true at last[2]. Of course, later on his *Retractationes*[3] cancelled some of these things, but also affirmed the substantial identity of others with Christian doctrine.

It is as though he were tarrying in the vestibule before entering a Christian basilica. But we must deal more briefly with the remaining treatises of these earlier stages, viz. the *Soliloquia*[4] and *De Immortalitate Animae*. These all, more or less, deal with the same general theme of God and the soul, products, all of them, of the absorbing intensity of these constant and dominating concerns in his own life. Again, he retraces the data of his past life and the aims and objects now cast aside[5]. Again, too, we meet that curious fusion of purely logical and psychological procedure with profound spiritual concerns. In the *Soliloquia*, particularly, the last work done at the farmstead of his friend Verecundus before he returned to Milan, his Neoplatonic reading is still very palpable, *e.g.* "God who willed it that the pure only should know

[1] Plotinus, *Enneades*, III, 8, 9: τὸ ὄντως ἕν,...V, 4, 1: Δεῖ μὲν γάρ τι πρὸ πάντων εἶναι ἁπλοῦν τοῦτο καὶ πάντων ἕτερον τῶν μετ' αὐτό, οὐ μεμιγμένον τοῖς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ—ὂν ὄντως ἕν.

[2] *De Ordine*, II, 50, 52.

[3] *Retractationes*, I, 3.

[4] Abundantly certified both by their intrinsic genuineness and also by the *Retractationes* (I, 114).

[5] *Soliloquia*, I, 17.

the truth" (1, 2); "Father of the intelligible light." "To return to Thee." "Source of all clear intelligence." "The rejection of the evidence of the mere senses." "If those things, which Plato and Plotinus said about God, are true, are you content to know God in the way those men knew him?" (1, 9.) Reason and Augustine are the two interlocutors, and what has just been cited is an utterance of Reason. A knowledge of God quite as definite and irrefragable as mathematical axioms; who would not cherish it?

I must limit myself to but one more of these Platonizing utterances, spoken by *Ratio* likewise:

> Those sense-perceptions must be utterly avoided, and we must have a great care, while we live in this body [dum hoc corpus agimus], lest our feathers be interfered with by some birdlime of those[1], which [pinions] we need to be complete and perfect that we may fly away to that light from this darkness [1, 24].

There was then, in that state of the rhetor's soul, an unmistakable affinity with Plato's most spiritual theses, as Augustine was turning his back on this world and all its allurements. But, *pari passu*, Biblical religion was gaining life and consciousness in the same soul, and the Biblical character of these *suspiria* will, I trust, need no commentary or elucidation for readers: "God, to whom faith stirs us on, to whom Hope rouses us, with whom Love joins us" (1, 3). "God, through whom death is swallowed into victory." "God who converts us" (1, 3). "God, who leads us into all truth." "God who acts that the door be opened to those who knock." "God, who gives us the bread of Life." "God, through whom we are thirsty for a beverage, after drinking which we

[1] *Scil.* sense-perceptions, sense-allurements.

are satisfied[1]." Again are we confronted with thesis, definition, inference, conclusion, agreement, concession, proof; it is the rhetor and trained dialectician, but entirely without the dramatic and domestic apparatus of the preceding dialogues.

Early in 387 A.D., having returned to Milan and still a catechumen, he wrote his *De Immortalitate Animae*, a complement or conclusion to the Soliloquies, which he felt to be a *torso*. In his *Retractationes*[2] he deals with it as of little value, a confused performance, still, to us it is a document of the great transition. It is indeed a *tour de force* of sheer thinking, a cogitative effort, a dialectic effort pure and simple. Some of the axioms, I fear, are not as self-evident as he felt them to be at the time, as this one: "That which is, and is immutable, must needs be eternal" (1). Or, the interdependence of the eternity of the truth perceived and the perceiving soul-power. Still strongly swayed here by Plato and Plotinus, he is much inclined to assume an existence of the soul before incarnation, since it was not self-made, nor the product of an evolution. Nor is the soul a harmony or a harmonious blending of physical factors or material coefficients[3]. Throughout this keen, though laboured, enquiry, Augustine confounds or identifies logical-metaphysical *essence*, or essential truth, with the actuality of existence. He compares the abstract *veritas* (19) with the concrete *verum*, the former being a *prima essentia*—quite in the Platonic manner. How are we to conceive of the problem of *deterioration* of the soul,

[1] See John iv, 14. [2] 15.

[3] Even Aristotle in his day (*De Anima*, 1, 4) had denied that the soul was a mere ἁρμονία (adjustment, blending—Augustine, *temperatio*) of physiological functions or factors.

if we hold its immortality axiomatic? If the supreme good is non-material, then it is not of this universe which we know[1]. The body subsists through the soul, and the supreme essence, or highest good, gives a form to the body through the soul[2]. Nor is the soul a composite substance. In this there is not a trace of Biblical allusion or influence. Still we must refrain from rash inferences. I do not think he intended publication at the time.

At Easter, 387 A.D., he was baptized at Milan, and soon after, with mother, brother, and son, he went to Rome. There he composed a dialogue, *De Quantitate Animae*. His fellow-interlocutor is Evodius, a retired military man and fellow townsman of Tagaste. "What are the 'dimensions' of the soul?" He is still deeply enamoured of the axiomatic truth of mathematical theses, and of the ideal or eternal truths therein implied. These being non-material, the soul must be likewise. It must be a substance capable of reason and controlling the body. You cannot conceive the mind spatially. Do greater achievements mean greater souls? Or is not all such predication a mere metaphor abstracted from the physical world? Is not the genuine advancement of the soul quite independent of any correlated physical growth? This we often observe in old men. Again he analyzes the acts of the understanding with keen discrimination. The essence and identity[3] of a given man is in his soul. He finally sums all up in seven degrees or functions of soul-life[4]: Mere vitality (*animatio*), the senses of sense-perception (*per corpus*), attainment (*ars, circa corpus*), excellence (*virtus, ad se*

[1] So Augustine rejects Manichaeism and Pantheism.
[2] *De Immortalitate Animae*, 9, 14, 17, 19, 22.
[3] We would say, *the personality*. [4] *De Quantitate Animae*, 79.

ipsam), peace of soul (*in se ipsa*), entrance (*ingressio ad Deum*), contemplation (*apud Deum*). And now the Biblical vein reappears, the doffing of the old man, and putting on of the new[1]. He also cites Ecclesiastes[2], but in his own text, thus: "Vere videbimus quam sint omnia sub sole vanitas vanitantium," with his own exegesis appended. We must believe what the church commands us to believe; he cites here, quite faultily, I believe, 1 Corinthians iii, 2: "I have fed you with milk," etc. We are here confronted with that tremendous and portentous dogma, the core of all further Romanism, of endowing with transcendent authority the supreme corporation *qua* corporation.

Let us now turn to that imperishable narrative of his last weeks and days with his mother, Monica. His Confessions, may I repeat, are by no means a general or exhaustive autobiography up to that time when at Ostia he was waiting for the last voyage back to Africa with his mother. This famous book is a spiritual autobiography, written some twelve years afterwards and when he had left far behind most of those earlier struggles and strivings[3]. Viewing his mother's life as a whole, she had indeed been a handmaiden of the servants of God[4]. At Ostia, then, they were together, resting for the impending voyage, in harmonious affection as pure and sweet as is ever vouchsafed to men on this poor earth. There they were, looking out on that sapphire sea that still lay between them and home—home once more. And they conversed somehow, removed as they now were from the roar and the distrac-

[1] St Paul, Col. iii, 10.
[2] *De Quantitate Animae*, 76.
[3] *Conf.* IX, 7 sqq.
[4] *Serva servorum Dei.*

tions of the great city they had but lately left behind[1] —they conversed about God and the eternal life of the saints, a life which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man. And in that sweet spiritual communion, rising above all mundane things to the outlook on that life which is to be immutably blessed for ever and ever, when sin and time shall be no more, they were expectant of the last voyage. Stilled for them were all the clamorous noises of men and all the futilities of men's pursuits, their souls wrapt in that text: "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" ("Intra in gaudium domini tui," Matt. xxv, 21). When will that be? When we shall all rise, but not all shall be transformed (1 Cor. xv, 51). The very world of men seemed to become cheapened for them (*vilesceret*) amid such themes.

Monica expressed her ineffable satisfaction, that she had lived to see the child of her prayers and tears a professed Christian before she passed away. Earth had nothing further for her now, she intimated. Five days only after this conversation fever set in, and Monica had to take to her bed. She declined with startling rapidity, often being comatose. Once, when clear, she earnestly gazed upon her two sons, who in speechless grief were standing by her bedside. Then she asked them where they would bury her. The older son, Augustine, checked his tears and said nothing. Navigius, the younger, then expressed (as though anticipating her own choice) the plan that she was to be borne to Africa and buried by the side of her husband, Patricius, at Tagaste. But she looked at him who had spoken with a reproving glance, and then she said to Augustine: "'See, see, what does he

[1] *Conf.* IX, 23.

say?' And soon she said to both of us: 'Lay this body of mine at rest anywhere at all; let not that care trouble you at all. Only this I ask of you, that you remember me at the Lord's altar, wherever you shall be'" (*Conf.* IX, 28). Even this she uttered with great effort, for she suffered severely. As a matter of fact, she had indeed long before arranged for her own last resting-place, by her husband's grave, who had died some sixteen years before; on this spot hitherto her mind had been set; it was her last wish—rather it had hitherto been—her last wish on earth. Now it happened before her last and fatal illness at Ostia, Augustine being absent, some friends conversing with her, they had talked of the possibility of one's dying far from home, when Monica uttered these words: "*Nothing is far from God*, nor need one fear that He will fail to recognize the spot whence to resurrect me." She passed away on the ninth day of her illness, in her fifty-sixth year and in the thirty-third year of Augustine, who closed his mother's eyes and had her buried at Ostia.

As for that most famous book in all his vast production, his Confessions, many readers, even Christians, may still marvel that he designed such a work for publication at all. In a way it is a great and a protracted prayer. But it lies really far beyond the earlier stages of the Bishop of Hippo, being written about 400 A.D. It was composed near the meridian point of a wonderful life. At that time psychology, pure dialectic, metaphysics, Platonic tenets of soul and God—all these had become subsidiary to the Biblical aspect of things. Now Biblical phrase, Biblical sentiment, substantial affinity with all things Scriptural had become the very ink that furnished his *stylus* in composition. These reminiscences

deal with the long way in which he moved towards, or receded from—or with troubled and restless soul resumed his approximation to—God. And this process, so long protracted in his case, and ending so, is no mean attestation of that finality and that positive foundation, which, in all the ages, the Scriptures have held out to those who seek God with a sincere and earnest heart. He was indeed a humble Christian, but still the brilliant rhetor and keen dialectician in him was not a mere actor's mask which he laid aside for ever when he resigned his chair as rhetor at Milan, in early summer, 386 A.D. Augustine, in plain truth, is the same (in his Confessions) as before, in the pregnancy or in the scintillating brilliancy of his antithesis, or in the felicity of his epigrammatic utterance, and he is in my estimate the greatest master of Latin prose literature in the generation of Ambrose and Jerome, and of Symmachus, Servius, and Macrobius[1].

I close this chapter with two famous citations from the Confessions. One was made by Petrarch. It was about 1336, when that pathfinder of the Humanists, residing generally in the Vaucluse near Avignon, had made an ascent of Mt Ventoux. He had with him a copy of Augustine's Confessions, and as he gazed out from that peak on the wide and noble panorama of the Provence, he opened that book and his eyes were arrested by Confessions X, 15: "And men go to admire the peaks of mountains, and the vast floods of the sea, and the broad gliding of the rivers, and the sweep of the ocean, and the orbits of the stars, *and they neglect themselves*[2]." And the other passage from these famous Confessions, the

[1] Not to name the exotic and awkward Ammian.

[2] Cf. *Testimonium Animae*, by E. G. Sihler, p. 29.

words which perhaps have been cited more than any other spiritual truth, outside of Scripture itself, nor is there anything read by more myriads of men, or more worthy to be read; and then, too, is it not a condensed summary of the earlier stages of Augustine? "Because thou didst make us for Thee [towards Thee], and restless is our heart until it repose in Thee[1]."

[1] "Quia fecisti nos ad te, et inquietum est cor nostrum, donec requiescat in te" (*Conf.* I, 1). And He is not merely that metaphysical conceit, Aristotle's First Cause: "Hunc amemus, hunc amemus, ipse fecit haec et non est longe. *Non enim fecit atque abiit*; sed ex illo in illo sunt" (IV, 18).

CHAPTER XI

THE TWO SONS OF THEODOSIUS AND ALARIC THE GOTH

THAT my last two chapters have a curious interdependence of subjects is well known to all earnest and attentive students of European history. And still, on closer vision, we observe that the fundamental independence and sovereign aloofness of the spiritual commonwealth is impressively claimed, asserted, demonstrated by that mind in which the epoch of Arcadius and Honorius, of Alaric, Stilicho, and Jerome found its most varied expression and attestation, a mind, too, in which Christianity and the better culture of classic paganism were fused in a unique manner, and a mind, finally, which fairly stands alone, in that generation, in the rarest powers of deep thought no less than of keen and forceful presentation. I refer, of course, to Augustine.

And first I must beg permission of my readers to make a preliminary explanation. In Augustine's later life there came on the crisis, long maturing, in which paganism and the officially Christianized Roman Empire itself were made to suffer alike in a catastrophe, or a series of overwhelming disasters. These Gibbon (1774–1788) has related with a skill and care hitherto perhaps unexcelled, producing indeed a narrative and exposition to which the ensuing one hundred and thirty-three years have made no noteworthy addition[1]. It is the very

[1] Unless it be Gregorovius.

period in which the *Decline* is accelerating towards the *Fall*, and here indeed, in a measure, the British historian has surpassed himself[1].

[1] To this I here and now bear witness in a particular manner. In what way? May I venture a personal observation? Long ago and during more than four decades before the present time, I had formed the habit of avoiding as far as possible mere transcription of others' conclusions. I was never content to be a mere funnel of another man's presentation. So then, when at last I came to the generation following upon, or merging into, that of Symmachus, Ambrose, Theodosius, and Damasus, when I arrived at the era of Arcadius and Honorius, of Stilicho and Alaric, of Jerome and Augustine, I strove with great earnestness, in consummating a five years' task, not to become a mere echo of Edward Gibbon. I excerpted or abstracted, with honest care, Augustine, Orosius, Claudian the publicist and poet of Stilicho's fame (Gibbon by the bye not rarely transcribes or boldly appropriates some telling turn or touch of Claudian's, directly), the Christian poet Prudentius of Spain (who bears witness to the remarkable tenacity, at Rome, of paganism in its last stages), Jordanes (or Jornandes), the ecclesiastic historians Socrates and Sozomenos, and the passionately pagan Byzantine historian Zosimus. Synesios of Cyrene, in his essay on the ideal monarch (addressed to Arcadius), illumines the Gothic problem of that epoch with startling clearness.

Now then, returning from all this source work and research to Gibbon's narrative, I could not but be puzzled by the delicate nicety of his investigation of detail as well as by the fairness and felicity of many of his generalizations. At the same time, and once for all, I will set down a brief anthology of utterances, in which Gibbon's attitude towards religious matters is revealed, in his 29th and his 30th chapters: "And when Rufinus was purified, in the holy font, from all the sins that he had hitherto committed." "The peaceful city was inflamed by the beldam Marcella and the rest of Jerome's faction." "The Pagans deplored the neglect of omens and the interruption of sacrifices; but the Christians still derived some comfort from the powerful intercession of the saints and martyrs." "Orosius [VII, 37] is shocked at the impiety of the Romans, who attacked, on Easter Sunday, such pious Christians." "I wish to believe the story of St Telemachus. Yet, no church has been dedicated, no altar has been erected to the only monk who died a martyr to the cause of humanity."

This period, then, in which everything long established seemed, by the mighty and irresistible current of events, to be swept to a

When Theodosius died at Milan, January 17, 395 A.D., his older son, Arcadius, then at Constantinople, was but seventeen to eighteen years old, while the younger, Honorius, was not much more than a child some ten years old. Theodosius did not really design to divide the Empire, but rather, in Diocletian's manner, to divide or apportion the task of governing the Empire. We observe that after the death of Theodosius Rome and Constantinople each furnished one of the two consuls after whom the year was named. A lad in the East, a child in the West. We must weigh this soberly. For never did the Empire more bitterly need union, a strong arm, and a sovereign mind than at that time. But when Theodosius had closed his eyes and Ambrose had presided over the exequies, the divided throne was not only not strong, but actually and potentially weak. But my own limits prescribe a briefness inconsistent with the historical importance of the great crisis then rapidly approaching.

The Goths originally came down from Scandinavia (Scandia) to what now is southern Russia. They were drawn on by many things—a milder climate, but even more by the accumulated wealth of an older civilization,

final catastrophe and cataclysm, was in very truth also a test, whether the younger religion, Christianity, was or was not to perish together with paganism itself, with which it had so long contended for the mastery. It is quite impossible in these concluding chapters to relate only the one without the other; quite unwise, too, to heed only the voice of the Christian leaders, then more than ever challenged to defend their own faith and hope, as in Augustine's monumental work (*De Civitate Dei*); quite impossible to follow and appreciate this without some careful narrative of secular history and what the Goths were in it, both in the *Oriens* and in the *Occidens*. Some modern manuals, like that of George Park Fisher, tell everything from the accession of Theodosius, 378 A.D., to Alaric's sack of Rome, 410 A.D., in seventeen printed lines.

and above all by their fixed purpose to find, somewhere within or on the confines of the Roman Empire, a permanent and well chosen abode. As long as they failed to secure this they were, of necessity, migratory.

Jordanes[1] tells us that they moved on before the pressure of the Mongolian Huns, who had come from Asia, and in Julian's time had reached the sea of Asow. As to these we must refer the reader to Ammian's detailed and careful description. As Julian's *quondam* officer puts it, they, like the Alani, were fairly grown together with their steeds[2]. As for the Goths themselves, they had, at Adrianople, 378 A.D., delivered a staggering blow against the Eastern part of the Empire, and this very disaster had brought the foremost military expert of the Western Empire, Theodosius, into imperial responsibility. In the desperate struggle with the usurper Eugenius (394 A.D.), the Emperor just named had employed a Gothic corps as "Allies," or *Foederati*, not mercenaries, let alone subjects. The Gothic chieftains, or dukes, Gainas and Alaric, were important sub-commanders in the critical two-day battle of the Frigidus River (Wippach), at the foot of the Julian Alps. The real schemer, or Warwick, behind the wretched usurper Eugenius had been a German, the Frank, Arbogast. Even then the Empire had been sustained in great part by German semi-barbarians, who had no interest whatever in its integrity or preservation.

After the death of Theodosius, Stilicho, a man of

[1] A Goth or Alan, about 551, compiled Cassiodorus, whose work is now lost.

[2] Ammian, 31, 2, 20: "Iuventus vero equitandi usu a prima pueritia coalescens." Perhaps we should read, "<equis> equitandi usu coalescens." Ammian is thinking of the centaurs of Greek mythology.

Vandal stock, tested above all his contemporaries in Italy by the largest tasks of war and peace, husband of the late Emperor's niece Serena, politically, culturally, ecclesiastically at least, a Roman, had been appointed guide and guardian of the young boy Honorius, in whose dull or feeble *ingenium* there does not seem to have been the slightest endowment for assuming the imperial purple. The genius of no minister or strategist could have made amends for, or balanced the debility of such heirs[1]. For Arcadius, at Constantinople, was even more a weak and utterly pampered lad, surrounded as he was and exploited by a camarilla of eunuchs and other vicious favourites. His chief adviser, and the virtual regent on the Bosporus, was the minister Rufinus. We may call both him and Stilicho vicars of the Empire. Zosimus[2] says that Arcadius and Honorius were merely *nominal* rulers; that the two prime ministers gained enormous wealth from those men of the day whose riches were notorious—that verdicts and decrees even were sold for money[3]. The youthful "emperors" merely signed what the regents presented to them to sign. They could, at that time, hardly do more than that. However, it is clear to us, that while military capacity was in every way the most crying need of the times, in this sphere Stilicho at Milan was incomparably superior to

[1] "Coeperuntque eius filii utramque rempublicam luxuriose viventes adnihilare" (Jordanes, *Getica*, 146).

[2] V, 1. Zosimus was a *comes* at Constantinople, and an official of the imperial treasury there. He seems to have written between 450–500 A.D. Cf. L. Mendelsohn, *Rheinisches Museum*, vol. XLII, pp. 525 sqq.

[3] Of course, if we trust Stilicho's herald of fame, Claudian, such abuses were confined to the practice of Rufinus at Constantinople. The article *Rufinus* in Suidas seems largely to have been derived from Zosimus.

Rufinus on the Bosporus. The former had been left by Theodosius as *magister utriusque militiae*, or supreme head of the army.

In the earlier part of this year, 395, Alaric the Goth marched towards Constantinople from Moesia, obviously to extort tribute or some large territorial grant; besides, the annual payments to the Goths had been withheld. Alaric advanced as far as the outskirts of the Eastern capital. Perhaps Rufinus bought him off. Alaric with his Goths now traversed Macedon and entered Thessaly. Here Stilicho with a Roman army confronted him, near Larissa. Most of Stilicho's troops were those which, having served against the usurper Eugenius, were now being conducted back to the Bosporus. Now the Goths under Alaric in Thessaly were in an impregnable position; their camp was fortified by their customary bulwark[1] of carts, with pasture space within, all surrounded by a double foss; the draught-oxen had been slaughtered. The pass of Thermopylae was evacuated[2] to leave to the Goths a free passage towards the south. And the pocket of the Peloponnesian peninsula too might eventually prove a trap[3] for the Teutonic invaders.

As for Stilicho, we must not forget, that the contingents which he had been conducting east, with Constantinople their ultimate goal, were the least efficient legions (according to Zosimus) in all the army but recently commanded by Theodosius. Rufinus earnestly desired that his mighty rival of Rome and Milan should

[1] Claudian, v, 126.

[2] Zosimus (v, 5) says, by order of Rufinus—and Zosimus makes Rufinus responsible for all the disasters that followed from these beginnings.

[3] Von Wietersheim, *Geschichte der Voelkerwanderung*, 1864, vol. iv, p. 186.

not appear before the gates of Constantinople. North Greece had been cruelly ravaged by Alaric (according to Zosimus); the men put to the sword, women and children driven off herdwise, with all the wealth then seized. And still the Goths were, in a fashion, Christians, Arian Christians. Were they really Christianized? Before Stilicho could undertake a regular campaign against Alaric in Thessaly he received peremptory orders from the Eastern capital, to withdraw from the Eastern Empire and dismiss to Constantinople the contingents owing allegiance to Arcadius. Meanwhile, too, the Huns had broken through on the Caspian, had passed through Armenia into Syria, and after vainly besieging Antioch, had entered Asia Minor.

Nothing now hindered Alaric from invading classic Greece. The reader of these studies will not forget that "Hellas" still was the symbol and surname of classic paganism, and that the earnest pagans, by preference, simply called themselves "Greeks" (Hellenes), and that the illustrious seats of Hellenism were now exposed to a despoiling and destructive invasion, against which the glorious memories of Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea furnished no bulwark. For one decade the Empire had had a respite from storms coming from beyond the frontiers, but Theodosius was no more and the prestige of his name was rapidly and everywhere vanishing. In Constantinople the wretched prime minister Rufinus had been done to death before the town by infuriated soldiery returning from the West; the eunuch Eutropius, scheming to be his successor, had cleverly arranged a marriage for the lad Arcadius; the young lady who so promptly captivated his fancy was Eudoxia; bearing indeed this pure Greek name she was nevertheless the

daughter of a Frank, Bauto, who, born on the east bank of the Rhine, had assisted Theodosius against the Goths and even held the consulate on January 1, 385 A.D., when Augustine delivered his eulogy before him, rendering thanks for his appointment, at Milan.

Alaric now traversed Boeotia, neglecting the towns there, for he was hastening towards the venerable metropolis of "Hellenism," Athens herself. The Old Believers there, later on, recited and passed on as a legend, the story, that Athena Promachos, protectress of her own tutelary city, in her panoply, such as one could see in her cult-figures, had warned off the Goth, that the Achilles of the *Iliad* in supernatural apparition, had associated himself with her in that defence[1], and that this induced Alaric to deal more gently with Athens than he would otherwise have done. Clearly there still abounded in the classic town those Athenians who even then clung to the ancient gods not any less than to the ancient culture, men who at Athens held the same ground which at Rome had been held by Praetextatus, by Symmachus, Flavianus, and the others periodically gathered in the conventicles idealized by Macrobius.

Claudian, a contemporary of Alaric, says that Attic matrons were carried off as captives of war[2]. Now if Alaric did not spare these, he certainly did not spare their treasures; it is quite likely that he did spare the architecture of the Acropolis, the Erechtheum, the Parthenon, but exceedingly unlikely that he spared the sacred treasures there accumulated for more than eight centuries. Megara was taken without any struggle. Then

[1] "Ein von den Heiden erfundenes Tendenz-maerchen" (Otto Seeck, *Alaricus*, Wissowa, col. 1287).

[2] Claudian, II, 191: "Nec fera Cecropiae traxissent vincula matres."

Alaric entered the Peloponnesus, nowhere meeting any serious resistance. Did Gerontius weakly or treacherously abandon the Isthmus? The fortifications there had furnished to the places within the famous peninsula their security, or at least their sense of security[1]. There was no further defence, Zosimus says. At once Corinth was taken (without capitulation), as well as the minor towns. The smoke of the conflagration of the famous Isthmian emporium soon rolled out on the Aegean Sea and the Gulf of Corinth[2]. It is true, Corinth had lost much of its commercial eminence to Alexandria and Rhodes, but still she had been the capital of the Roman province of Achaia[3]. One marvels that not even the towering Acro-corinth had been made into an impregnable fortress. If the great sanctuary of Poseidon had still contained the works of art and other treasures described by Pausanias[4] in the era of the Antonines—some of gold, some of ivory, as Castor and Pollux, the guiding stars of seafaring men—then these certainly were not spared by Alaric, who associated no idea whatever of sacrilege with the spoliation of pagan temples. Soon venerable Argos (favourite abode of Hera) shared the fate of her northern neighbour, and Sparta, once fortified by her stout manhood alone, was now helpless.

As Alaric and his men had to live off the country

[1] Zosimus, v, 6.

[2] Non mare fumasset geminum flagrante Corintho" (Claudian, II, 190).

[3] In the time of Augustus and Tiberius the entire circumference of the walls had been not less than 85 stadia, some ten miles of our measurement (Strabo, p. 379, Casaubon). From the level of the city to the top of Acro-corinth the distance by the winding ascent was 30 stadia, or more than three miles. In the latter Empire the defences of Corinth probably had fallen into decay.

[4] II, I, 7.

directly, the entire peninsula almost must have been utterly stripped of whatever supplies of grain she was wont to sustain herself by. Zosimus thinks the officials of the Eastern Empire must have been traitors—a vain imputation; traditions and idealizations cannot protect decaying and decadent communities in such a crisis. Did Olympia share the general fate? Few spots in all the Hellenic world were so rich in treasure and monuments, few so hallowed by the veneration or affection of the ages and the nations, few indeed could have furnished as many attractions to Alaric and his despoiling Goths. We have a contemporary utterance written by Jerome in his monastery of Bethlehem, probably in this very year 396, in which the sadness of the times is most eloquently reflected[1]:

> It is now twenty years or more, since, in all that territory which lies between Constantinople and the Julian Alps, daily has Roman blood been shed. The Goths, Sarmatians, Quadians, Alans, Huns, Vandals, and Marcomanni are laying waste, overrunning, pillaging, Scythia, Thrace, Macedon, Dardania, Dacia (modern Rumania), Thessaly, Greece, Epirus, Dalmatia, and all the provinces of Pannonia (Hungary). How many matrons, how many nuns, how many persons of gentle blood and of aristocratic lineage have been the sport of these monsters! Bishops have been made prisoners, presbyters put to the sword....Churches have been destroyed, horses stalled at the altars of Christ, bones of martyrs dug out....The Roman world is tottering to its fall, and still our proud neck will not bend. What spirit now do you think have the people of Athens, of Corinth, of Sparta, of Arcadia, of all Greece, over which the barbarians hold sway?

We note particularly this last statement. But even while the fiery ascetic of Bethlehem was writing, help was coming from the West. Stilicho having secured or

[1] Jerome, *Epistolae*, 60, § 16 (*ad Heliodorum*).

settled the Rhine frontier through treaties, sailed into the Corinthian gulf with a Roman army, marched into Arcadia, and succeeded in blockading the invaders at Pholoë near the sources of the Alpheios[1]. Disease and famine carried off many of the invaders. The public opinion of that day asked why Stilicho did not utterly annihilate the remainder. What was left of southern Greece could breathe more freely[2]. Somehow Alaric did escape with his remnant and, crossing the Corinthian gulf, ravaged Epirus. But those in power at Constantinople bade Stilicho depart from Greece. In the end he arranged that Alaric became governor or viceroy of Illyricum with an annual allowance differing little from tribute.

The fact seems to be that neither Italy nor the provinces had any longer the vigour or fitness of military efficiency; drained and burdened by an exhausting system of century-old and ever-increasing taxation, the subjects in the provinces could neither protect themselves nor had they any strong motive for saving Rome or the bureaucrats imposed upon them by the Roman system. Now Stilicho was more familiar with all these things than any one or all of the older Roman aristocracy who lived in a nebula of grand memories and long-inherited pretensions. Constantinople was even worse off than Milan or Rome, for Arcadius had no Stilicho for guide or counsellor.

Now there is preserved for us a political essay by Synesius of Cyrene, written and addressed to Arcadius

[1] Claudian, VIII, 460 sqq.

[2] "Excutiat cineres Ephyre [Corinth], Spartanus et Arcas Tutior exsanguis pedibus proculcet acervos Fessaque pensatis respiret Graecia poenis" (Claudian, VIII, 471 sqq.). Zosimus (V, 7) bitterly charges Stilicho with being smitten by women, etc., etc.

himself at Constantinople at this very time, 397[1], the very year when the harrowing devastation of classic Greece must have been uppermost in all minds. This political paper of the waning century and waning Roman Empire abounds with curious lights and suggestions for the student of that period, an epoch when Stilicho (vicegerent of the West and the only prop remaining for sustaining, amid incessant anxieties, the old order) had been declared a public enemy by the feeble youth Arcadius. Of course this foolish act was entirely due to his chief advisers, among whom the eunuch Eutropius was the most powerful. Synesius deals with the ideal ruler, but not quite abstractly; the essay indeed often touches very plainly actual conditions, permitting a close vision of many problems of the day.

Synesius was to deliver a golden wreath to Arcadius and incidentally to petition for a reduction of Cyrene's taxation. Theodosius, he urged, had gained the purple through military efficiency, while to the present ruler the throne had come without toil or achievement. Both imperial youths were inexperienced, whereas the times were stern. The mere multitude of the sheep did not automatically produce excellence in the shepherd, who must not fatten himself on his flock. The Emperor should personally and directly be known to his troops, not merely through images and portraits. It was evil that the eunuchs kept Arcadius from the public gaze,

[1] Cf. the admirable monograph on Synesius, by T. R. Halcomb, of Lincoln College, Oxford, in Smith and Wace, vol. IV, 1887, pp. 756–780. The favourite world of the Cyrenian scholar, then about thirty-two to thirty-three years old, was that of Homer and Hesiod, Herodotus and Plato. Among his ideals of administrative efficiency are Cyrus, Pericles, Agesilaus, Iphicrates, Epaminondas.

like a divine being not seeing or hearing what was wholesome for him to see and hear, given over to the grosser pleasures of life[1], "a mere jelly-fish, not a human being[2]." Synesius sharply rebukes the luxury of Arcadius' dress, like that of a veritable peacock; the times indeed demanded Spartan simplicity.

The whole Roman Empire was like a body full of ailments. Non-Romans, alas, constituted the strength of imperial defence while Romans were excused from service—alas, the military service was in the hands of Goths! There was need of conscription of Romans. Our own people, said he, are unwarlike, fond of theatres, mere drones. Those worthy to be called men *are no Romans*. It is these who gain the victories for the Empire. The men of arms will rule. But yesterday these Goths wore their rude sheepskins; to-day they assume the senatorial toga and share in the deliberations of government. It is a disgrace. Again, look at the households of Constantinople; they swarm with the same blonde and long-haired barbarians. Of course, they cannot be faithful and loyal, because they hope to rule their present masters some day. He seems to allude to Stilicho in bitter innuendo, but he refrains from naming him. Whether high or low, these barbarians have an ethnic consciousness which knits them closely together. Check the evil now, before it becomes invincible. The Goths behaved meekly to Theodosius after he defeated them, but he took the grave step of making them "allies" of Rome. Arcadius should now adopt a vigorous

[1] Synesius, *De Regno*, 15: Μόνας ἡδομένους τὰς τοῦ σώματος ἡδονάς, καὶ τούτων γὲ τὰς ὑλικωτάτας. See also the citation from Chrysostom in Gibbon, ch. 32.

[2] A Platonic remembrance. We marvel at the boldness of the phrase.

policy of preparation and preparedness. As for the soldiery in garrisons, they must be watch-dogs, not wolves among the flock. The grinding imports of imperial taxation must be reduced or more fairly adjusted; for governors you should choose not the richest men (as now), but the best ones[1].

As for imperial decrees concerning religion at this time, they were equally severe against heretics and against Old Believers at the older capital; though we may well doubt as to any serious execution there, though now there is a state church and a hierarchy rigidly attentive to all the possibilities of increasing their power in a palpable manner. The Jews enjoyed complete religious freedom[2].

Meanwhile the cleft between Rome (Milan) and Constantinople was widening. Gildo, governor of the province of Africa, rose in rebellion against the government of Honorius or Stilicho. His plan was, to attach the province, one of the granaries more than ever essential to Rome, to the Eastern Empire. Besides, the grain fleets of Alexandria[3] now regularly were sent to Constantinople. On the Tiber, for a while, the famine was severe. Gildo, by controlling the grain of "Africa" (the province) had accumulated great wealth. But Stilicho arranged to bring grain from Gaul, and in the spring of 398 Gildo, deserted by his own troops, was captured and executed[4].

[1] Synesius, *op. cit.* 21, 25, 28.

[2] For data and texts, see Clinton, *Fasti Romani*, *sub anno* 396.

[3] "Cum subiit par Roma [the city of Constantinople] mihi divisaque sumpsit aequales aurora togas, Aegyptia rura in partem cessere novam. Spes unica nobis restabat Libye" (Claudian, xv, 61 sqq.).

[4] O. Seeck, in Wissowa, s.v. *Gildo*.

In 399, the wretched prime minister of Arcadius, the eunuch Eutropius, fell into disgrace and found refuge in a Christian church of the capital, while crouching under an altar and listening to a discourse of the bishop, John Chrysostom. The new dangers threatening Arcadius from the treacherous Goth Gainas and the latter's end, I have no space here to relate.

As for Rome, we observe that Stilicho had once more endowed the Senate with some share of counsel and interest in the current business of government[1]. The interval of peace was but brief. Apart from the maintenance of the Rhine frontier, from the task of defending Britain against Picts and Scots, and against Anglo-Saxon fleets, the vicegerent of the West was compelled (in 401 or 402) to defend Italy herself against Alaric. It was the first time Germans had invaded Italy since the Cimbri had come down by the Brenner, some 500 years before. Alaric, after taking many cities, advanced on Milan, where was the court of Honorius, then a youth of nineteen. Stilicho hastened up with his recent levies and raised the siege. Alaric had used the resources of Illyricum entrusted to him to prepare this very invasion. He then marched westward into Piedmont, where he could cross the Po more easily and then march on Rome itself, a city infinitely richer than Athens or Corinth—Rome, despoiler and exploiter of the Mediterranean world for many centuries. That capital was in an anxious state. On Easter Sunday, April 6, 402 (Seeck), near Pollentia (some thirty miles south-south-west of Turin) a battle was fought which had important results. The Tiber indeed was there defended; the Goths (who were Arians) did not, it seems, expect any clash of

[1] Claudian, XXI, 328.

arms on that great anniversary of the Christian religion[1]. The forces of Stilicho were largely non-Italian, non-Roman. Night put an end to the struggle, but Alaric lost his camp with all his loot[2] of recent years. Still he was even yet a great menace, and Stilicho preferred to make a military treaty with him, for the Goths had taken a strong position in the Apennines. Alaric, however, did not keep his engagements, but attempted to take Verona on his way home by a sudden stroke. In this he failed and after fearful hardships escaped once more across the Julian Alps into his own Illyricum.

This was the zenith of Stilicho's fortunes. Rome abandoned herself to unbounded rejoicings and felicitations the echoes of which still resound from Claudian's hexameters no less than in the verse of Prudentius, the fervid Christian poet, who had come from Spain to Rome in this sunset period of Roman glory. Even now, after Pollentia, the bitter spirit of the Old Believers at Rome was still rife; Symmachus and his friends and kindred were not backward in charging upon the Christian religion the evils of the times.

There are those [wrote Prudentius[3], then at Rome] who do not hesitate to taunt us with the unfortunate wars, after we had despised the altars of the temples, and they say that Afric Hannibal was driven back from the hinges of the Colline Gate [211 B.C.] through the orders of Jove and Mars—they say that the victorious Senones were routed [389 B.C.] from the Capitoline citadel since the divine powers above were battling from the lofty rock.... The Gothic usurper recently [in the Pollentia campaign] tried to destroy Italy, coming from his ancestral Danube, sworn to level these towering structures, to dissolve

[1] On the entire campaign, cf. Claudian, XXVI, *De Bello Pollentino*, v. 571: "Romanum reparate decus molemque labantis Imperii fulcite umeris."

[2] So Claudian claimed.

[3] *Contra Symmachum*, II, 683 sqq.

with fire the gold-plated roofs[1], and now, forging ahead, he had laid waste the fields of the Veneti with his squadrons, had pillaged the wealth of the Ligurians and the charming farmsteads of the deep Po, and he was threatening Tuscan soil, having passed the stream [the Po]. Those clouds of horsemen were driven back not by the watchful goose [of the Capitol] that told of the hidden danger in the darkness of night, but the blunt force of men and the breasts of men broken in the shock and the spirit not dreading to die for the country and to seek fair fame through wounds. Really did that day [of Pollentia] too, under Jove's guidance, confer so great a reward of valour? [Follows some courtier phrase.] No, the leader of that band and chief command was a youth [Honorius] powerful through Christ [Christipotens] and his companion and father was Stilicho; they both had one and the same God, Christ. Having worshipped at His altars and having inscribed the cross on their foreheads; ahead of the serpents hastened the spear which raises the diadem of Christ more upward. There [at Pollentia] the tribe of Pannonia [the Goths], so deadly for thrice ten years, at last was destroyed [*sic*] and paid the penalty. The bodies once enriched by notorious looting, now lie, gathered into heaps; thou, Posterity, wilt marvel in late ages at the bodies [skeletons] far and wide, which covered the fields of Pollentia.

Clearly this poem or paean was composed when the news from Pollentia was fresh and the old Mistress of the World was once more preparing for something like a triumph: *Vicimus: exultare licet.*

As for the Old Believers, the Spanish Christian employs against them substantially the arguments used by Ambrose against Symmachus[2] some eighteen years before.

[1] Especially of Jupiter Capitolinus.

[2] As Seeck computes, Symmachus had been sent to Milan, on the part of the Senate, evidently before Pollentia, to entreat protection for Rome. Cf. Symmachus, *Epistolae*, ed. Seeck, VIII, 2, 13; IV, 9; V, 95. It was still winter when he went and when he returned to Rome (V, 96).

There are gladiators still in Rome; the mysteries of Mithras are still celebrated; only a few years later a barbarian far more ruthless than Alaric invaded Italy from the North. His name was Radagais. Fearful as this new danger was, the tradition of those years is fragmentary and obscure. He commanded[1] at least some 200,000 fighting men. Perhaps he had been with Alaric, and perhaps he was an Ostrogoth. Augustine[2] simply calls him "King of the Goths." Having taken several cities, he divided his huge host into several armies, under separate chieftains. Stilicho (relying largely on Hun mercenaries) gathered some thirty legions near Ticinum (Pavia), entered Tuscany, crossed the Arno, and inflicted a crushing defeat on Radagais near Fiesole, close by Florence. Or was it enclosure and starvation which caused the destruction of Radagais' corps? That leader surrendered and was executed. The survivors of his host were sold into slavery, and so vast was their number that they brought but one gold piece a head. Most of them were so emaciated that they soon died, and their burial cost more than the purchase price had been. Even then, the pagans in Italy had insisted that only the gods of Rome could save her[3], powers which the Christian church called *daemones*. Never did the star of Stilicho shine more brightly; a triumphal arch[4]

[1] Orosius, VII, 37. Zosimus is so vague that he confounds Danube with Arno.

[2] *De Civitate Dei*, V, 23.

[3] *Op. cit.* V, 23.

[4] In Dessau's collection, I, 798, Berlin, 1892: "Imppp. clementissimis toto orbe victoribus ddd. nnn. [dominis nostris] Arcadio Honorio Theodosio Auggg. [ustis: the prince last named being the infant son of Arcadius and Eudoxia] ad perenne indicium triumphorum, quod Getarum nationem in omne aevum docuere extingui [*sic*], arcum cum simulacris eorum tropaeisque decoratum S. p. q. R. totius operis splendore."

was erected "by the Senate and People of Rome." On it was chiselled the official but somewhat fanciful manifesto, "that the race of the Goths was extinguished for all time." As a matter of fact, Alaric had been steadily repairing the severe losses of Pollentia, and was biding his time.

December 31, 406 A.D., is one of the great dates of universal history. On that day huge masses of Vandals, Alani, and Suevi crossed the Rhine and entered Gaul, then the richest domain of the Roman Empire, having defeated the Franks. After pillaging far and wide, they finally reached the Pyrenees. Jerome, at Bethlehem, a few years later wrote thus: "Whatever land is between Alps and Pyrenees, between ocean and Rhine, Quadi, Vandals, Sarmatians, Alani, Gepids, Herulians, Saxons, Burgundians, Alemanni...have laid waste[1]." At the same time a subject of Rome, Constantinus, with Britain for his base, crossed into Gaul, much of which he held for a time, and even parts of Spain. His son Constans had been summoned from a monastery. And now even the loyal "Honorians" in Spain[2] ultimately permitted the German barbarians to enter Spain, the very time when the Spanish Presbyter Orosius was concluding his apologetic history of Rome. Amid all these overwhelming disasters the shadow-ruler Honorius, about twenty-four years old, felt himself safe neither at Milan nor Rome, but chose Ravenna for his residence, rendered impregnable from land attack by a system of sea fosses surrounding her fortifications. He was now married to Thermantia, second daughter of Stilicho and Serena, whose older daughter Maria, his first wife—child-wife—had died.

[1] Orosius, VII, 40.

[2] So Zosimus, V, 27, holds.

On May 1, 408, the wretched Arcadius passed away at Constantinople, some thirty-one years old. Was Alaric in Illyricum a mere *locum tenens* to hold it for ultimate annexation to the Western Empire[1]? Did the death of Arcadius stir Alaric? He now established his general camp at Emona (Laybach) whence he marched into Noricum (lower Austria). Thence came his envoys to Ravenna, demanding funds to reimburse him for his long delay in Epirus and the costs of his present operations. It was an urgent matter, and Stilicho in person appealed to the Roman Senate to vote for an appropriation; rejection would mean war. The majority of the Senate proudly protested, feeding their souls on the past; never should Rome purchase peace! In the end Stilicho prevailed; 4000 pounds of gold were voted. One senator, Lampridius, indeed shouted: "That is no peace, but a settlement of slavery!" But he promptly fled for asylum into a Christian church close at hand. Stilicho had opposed the choice of Ravenna for imperial residence, and earnestly also opposed the project of Honorius to go to Constantinople to settle the affairs of the deceased Arcadius; of course Honorius was utterly incompetent for such a task. He suggested also sending Alaric against the usurper Constantinus, who then had established his government at Arelate (Arles).

As Honorius now journeyed from Bologna to Pavia, a cunning courtier, the Greek upstart Olympius, poisoned the feeble sovereign's mind, whispering into his ear that Stilicho wished, after reaching Constantinople, to place his own son Eucherius on the Eastern throne. The new favourite at Pavia, Olympius, set in motion a soldier's

[1] Zosimus, v, 29, actually cites the Latin original: "Non est ista pax, sed pactio servitutis"—perhaps it became a winged word.

mutiny; German sub-commanders were suddenly cut down, among them the commander of the household troops; whoever held high post or emolument through Stilicho, perished; it was a vendetta of Romans against Teutons, an outbreak of a fury essentially racial. Stilicho's Hun bodyguards were massacred at night. Stilicho, hastening to Ravenna, fled into a Christian church out of which he was lured by lies and slain by imperial orders, August 23, 408. His young son Eucherius soon shared his fate[1]. After the last bulwark of Rome was gone, the new prime minister, Olympius, assumed the rôle of Defender of the Faith against a threatened restoration of paganism. Many of Stilicho's appointees were tortured to furnish some material to charge his memory with treason. Honorius divorced Stilicho's daughter Thermantia. Huge confiscations followed.

All survivors from the vendetta of Olympius sought shelter in the camp of Alaric. Racial feeling or fellow feeling of those who suffer particularly in times of persecution, is ever a mighty force in the souls and lives of men. The Goth now again demanded funds, with exchange of hostages and withdrawal to Danube country. Honorius, directed by his adviser, rejected all this and also appointed incompetent men to the higher military commands. Alaric now summoned his wife's brother,

[1] Orosius, writing very soon after these events, utters the current propaganda in which all Christian ecclesiastics seem to have agreed: "Occisus est Stilicho, qui, ut unum puerum purpura indueret, totius generis humani sanguinem dedidit. Occisus est et Eucherius, qui ad sibi conciliandum favorem paganorum, restitutione templorum et eversione ecclesiarum imbuturum se regni primordia minabatur" (Orosius, VII, 38)—an absolute falsehood. Jerome at Bethlehem, *Epistolae*, 123, 17, calls Stilicho "semibarbarus proditor." Zosimus (V, 34) extols the integrity of Stilicho as tested by a public career of some twenty-three years.

Ataulph, to join him soon. He himself passed by Aquileia and crossed the Po at Cremona; then, ignoring Ravenna, he appeared before Rome in the later autumn. Then the rabid Senate decreed execution for Stilicho's widow Serena[1]. Alaric completely inhibited all provisioning of Rome. At once the city was rationed, with steadily shrinking allotments; on famine followed the sequence of a plague, nor could the dead be buried outside the city, which thus became a ghastly tomb of her own dwellers, poisoning the breath of the survivors. Now only did the Romans realize that Alaric himself was there. The foolish threats of the envoys he treated with scorn. "The denser the hay," he said, "the easier the mowing!" It was Alaric indeed.

There were Old Believers who proposed that the Senate now resort to ritual atonements as prescribed by the Pontifical Books (then still extant). That the bishop Innocentius actually consented to such a course is more than we can believe; in fact we should reject it *because* Zosimus writes it. All, however, shrank from sharing in the essential publicity of the proposed rites. The final terms of capitulation were as follows: 5000 pounds of gold, 30,000 of silver, 4000 tunics of silk, 3000 fleeces dyed in purple, 3000 pounds of pepper. It was necessary then even to melt up some of the ornaments of ancient cult-figures, such as Virtus. Honorius, personally safe at Ravenna, was impotent to inhibit these enactments of the Roman senators. The capital was

[1] Zosimus (v, 38), the consistent Old Believer, herein discovers a retributive act of the gods, for Serena had appropriated for her own use a necklace which had adorned the cult-figure of the Magna Mater. An old Vestal, Zosimus adds, had at that time uttered imprecations to Serena's face. Stilicho was charged with having removed the gold plates from the doors of Jupiter Capitolinus.

once more provisioned and Alaric retired to Tuscany, joined by some 40,000 slaves[1]. The Senate sent envoys to Ravenna, requesting that a durable peace be concluded, but Olympius blocked everything, being chiefly occupied still with branding the memory of his eminent predecessor. Honorius despatched a body of troops to strengthen the feeble garrison of Rome; Alaric destroyed them.

Ataulph now arrived with the Gothic reinforcements from the Danube country. Then at last Honorius, urged by the eunuchs, deposed Olympius who fled to Dalmatia. The garrison at Ravenna became mutinous; their incompetent commanders were exiled, but those who conducted them away, slew them, by secret orders of Jovius, on whom the wretched Emperor now leaned. This newest adviser had a conference with Alaric at Ariminum, but Honorius refused to accept one of the chief demands of the Goth, viz. that Alaric be made chief commander of the forces of the Empire. When this refusal came by letter from Ravenna[2], Alaric became angry, but first warned the Romans by using as his mouthpieces the Christian bishops of North Italy. He now demanded Noricum (lower Austria) entire, a moderate annual tribute of money and of grain. Zosimus[3] calls these demands fair. Jovius counselled non-acceptance. Once more Alaric appeared before Rome. The Senate chose Attalus, then city prefect, emperor, a pompous and vain character. He "appointed" Alaric chief commander of the forces, and sipped the sweets of his sudden elevation by vainglorious proclamations, the ancient aristocratic house of the Anicii alone

[1] Zosimus, v, 41, 42.

[2] Zosimus, v, 49.

[3] v, 51: Ταῦτα ἐπιεικῶς καὶ σωφρόνως Ἀλαρίχου προτεινομένου.

holding aloof from the general joy. We must, however, be brief. Alaric was soon disgusted with his imperial puppet, who marched on Ravenna with dire threats against trembling Honorius. Alaric cast Attalus over and marched on Rome for the third time. It was now in the summer of 410—August 24. Stilicho's stipulations with the Goth had never been carried out. The bishop Innocentius was safely away.

It seems hard to believe, with Gregorovius[1], that the former capital of the Mediterranean world should have shrunk from the one and one-half millions of Trajan's time (say 110 A.D.) to a mere 300,000, in three hundred years' time. To Orosius in Spain, Christian presbyter as he was and with close personal relations to Augustine and to Jerome, the Rome of 410 appeared a place of iniquity[2]. It was believed at the time that Alaric entered Rome through some treasonable understanding. The tradition is fragmentary but harmonious in this one point: While the great town was plundered to the very bones and the barbarians indulged every passion of a maddened soldiery together with the intoxicating sense of irresponsible and wanton power to do or dare anything whatsoever to wealth and possession, to age or sex, still Alaric ordered that immunity should be observed for all persons and ecclesiastic objects within the basilicas of Peter and Paul and some other consecrated

[1] *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelatter*, 4th ed., 1886, I, p. 144. The enormous difficulty of attending efficiently to the grain supply of Rome, as it comes to our notice again and again in the letters of Symmachus and elsewhere, would seem to imply a larger population than 300,000.

[2] Orosius, VII, 39, "Superba lascivia, et blasphema civitas." Orosius does not seem ever to have visited Rome directly. Cf. VII, 39, *ut ferunt*.

abodes of martyrs' memorials (Orosius, VII, 39). Many pagans joined these processions which, amid the chanting of hymns, sought such asylum. On the third day the Goths withdrew, convinced no doubt that they had gained what they sought.

Thus, too, Gregorovius reminds the reader of the fulfilment of that sad vision which entered the noble soul of the younger Scipio in the year 146 B.C. as he was gazing on the extinction of Carthage, so long the rival of Rome's ambition, and the commercial mistress of the seas. Then Scipio felt that in some unknown future day Rome, too, would pass, and to his lips, somewhat instinctively, came the lines of the *Iliad*:

The day will be when sacred Troy will cease to be
And Priam too and people of Priam [once] good with ashen spear[1].

[1] So recorded by Polybius, 39, 6, an eye and ear witness of the memorable scene. *Iliad*, VI, 448–449:

Ἔσσεται ἦμαρ, ὅτ' ἄν ποτ' ὀλώλῃ Ἴλιος ἱρή,
Καὶ Πρίαμος καὶ λαὸς ἐυμμελίου Πριάμοιο.

CHAPTER XII

AUGUSTINE'S CITY OF GOD

FOR most classicists their sphere of interest and professional tradition is exhausted long before they reach the Rome of Honorius, Stilicho, and Alaric, whereas the postulates of historians and divinity students indeed decidedly take these in. It is so easy (and so much practised) to say (in academic chairs and elsewhere): "The overlapping of paganism and Christianity," or: "The juxtaposition of pagan institutions and the Christian church," and the like[1], but how they actually lived in their social habits, settled ideas, and so many ideals absolutely forbidding any genuine compromise or even *modus vivendi*, a few years before Alaric's entry, is difficult to visualize now.

Did the Bishop of Rome, *e.g.*, forbid the Christians attending vile mythological plays in the theatres or seeing gladiatorial shows? These were still in vogue when the Christian poet Prudentius came from Spain. Did the monk Telemachus really do what Theodoretus tells of him[2]? Did he descend into the arena at Rome, in

[1] I have read and weighed with care the material presented by H. F. Stewart of St John's College, Cambridge, in chapter XX of vol. I of the *Cambridge Medieval History*, a work of very distinguished merit. Still, if any single person has made some advance on Gibbon, it is, I think, Gregorovius. He has overlooked no clue, however detached or remote.

[2] Theodoretus (of Antioch), later Bishop of Kyrrhos in the Euphrates country, was about seventeen years old when Alaric sacked Rome, according to Tillemont (*Historia Ecclesiastica*, V, 26). Gregorovius calls it a legend. It is true, we have seen in these latter years how effectively propaganda can create and maintain legends.

some interval of these gory shows, to stop further bloodshed? Did the enraged spectators (pagan only?) on the spot stone to death this harbinger of peace? Did the incident move Honorius to end this pagan institution for ever[1]? Did the Christian worship in the basilicas of Rome in any striking or perceptible manner ameliorate or refine what we may call the public face of the old capital of the Mediterranean world[2]? Stilicho had burned the Sibylline books, which the Old Believers had considered to be the mysterious palladium of Roman world rule[3]. Nowhere in a single spot, not in Nineveh, Babylon or Persepolis, had imperialism, that pestiferous itch of strong governments, erected such a bewildering mass of monuments or monumental structures.

Rome's calendar of the civil year had long been the current iteration and reiteration of the sovereign city's pride of conquest and victory, while her gods were themselves the sources and patrons of this form of greatness; her very "religion" a series of imperialistic anniversaries[4]. So it was until the temples became, chiefly, monuments or museums of her proud past. No violent hand had as yet, before Alaric, destroyed any of them; unimpaired without was their architectural dignity, though they seem to have been largely bared

[1] Gibbon, as we saw before, doubts it.

[2] Gregorovius, I, p. 142: "Die verderbte Natur der Roemer blieb wie sie war, denn die Taufe aenderte sie nicht, und die Christliche Gesellschaft teilte mit der heidnischen die Bildung, den Geschmack und die Bedürfnisse."

[3] Rutilius Namatianus, v. 41: "Quo magis est facinus diri Stilichonis acerbum, Proditor arcani quod fuit imperii." (I owe this to Gregorovius.)

[4] Compare the splendid hexameters in Prudentius, *Contra Symmachi Orationem*, II, 342 sqq.

within. The gods of Rome, in short, had been essentially political patrons, from the Jupiter Capitolinus downward[1]. A great many were clustered around particular localities, especially in the *Regio* or quarter of the Circus Flaminius or of the Circus Maximus, as Jupiter Victor, the same as Stator, Liber, Fulgur, Tonans, Invictus; or Juno Lucina, J. Moneta, Matuta, Regina, Sospita; or abstractions, moral, political or otherwise, such as Concordia, Fors Fortuna, Ops, Mens, Honos et Virtus, Victoria Virgo, Juventas, Pietas, Felicitas, Pax. Then, for the tutelary powers of Egypt there were the Iseum and Serapeum[2], great temples too for the "Great Mother" of Phrygia, the Syrian goddess and others. The majority were due to vows made in great emergencies. Then, with the emperors there had come in the worship of these[3] after death, with temples and ritual sodalities, such as that of the Divus Julius in 29 B.C., of the Divus Augustus, Claudius, Vespasian, Titus, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius.

After Aurelian (275 A.D.) there was no new or important consecration of state temples in Rome, and this fairly coincides with the time when real expansion of empire ceased and when the tasks of maintenance, conservation, and defence were ever becoming more serious and severe, nay precarious. Jerome, in his monastic retreat at Bethlehem, a few years before the final Gothic catastrophe—his reminiscence being that of the episco-

[1] See the admirable survey in Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Roemer*, Muenchen, 1900. Anhang, p. 516.

[2] For which an entire "Regio" was named, one of the fourteen quarters of Rome.

[3] Cf. L. M. Sweet, *Roman Emperor Worship*, Boston, 1919, a doctoral thesis of New York University.

pate of Damasus, when he was gaining his greater prestige—wrote thus: "The gilded Capitol[1] is in a mean condition, all the temples of Rome are covered with soot and cobwebs. The city is being dislodged from its foundations, and the people who formerly were gathering as in a flood [*inundans*] before the half-tumbled down shrines, now run to the mounds of the martyrs[2]."

But we may safely say, that much of this (in the zelotic manner of the correspondent of Roman ladies of the aristocracy) was more of an expression of intense desire than a sober presentation of actual conditions. The huge mobs that enjoyed the amours on the stage of the Greek gods, the horse races of the Circenses, the wild beast shows, and the gladiators of the Flavian amphitheatre—was their Christianity or their conversion from the old order really more than skin-deep? Then, too, the aristocrats. Those whose esoteric conventicles had been held under the leadership of the foremost men in public life, such as Symmachus, had by no means even now turned their backs on that religion or body of ritual acts, with which to them the greatness of the past seemed so closely connected[3]. Even about Pollentia time (402) Symmachus was probably the foremost man in the Senate. The Spanish Presbyter Orosius, as we saw, after 410, from his distant watch-tower of the West, looked upon the fate of Rome as

[1] But this is in utter dissonance with Stilicho's eulogist, Claudian, "in VI Consulatum Honorii," 39–52. *V.* Gregorovius, I, p. 10.

[2] Jerome, *Epistola*, 107, *ad Laetam*. Letter ascribed by editors to 403 A.D.

[3] See also Prudentius, *Contra Symmachi Orationem*, to which I have adverted in the previous study. The thinkers of Rome had by no means all presented themselves at the baptismal font.

divine retribution for her worldliness and wantonness. Presbyters, it is true, at all times are sorely tempted to use severe terms when they condemn; but, in spite of Orosius' occasional declamation, we have indeed strong reasons for assuming that Rome was still a fairly pagan city when she saw Alaric within her walls. I gravely doubt the aptness of Dean Milman's view when he says (*Latin Christianity*, II, 1): "Christianity was now [*sic*] so completely the mistress of the human mind as to assert that it was indeed the power of her God. . . which had brought to its final close the Gentile sovereignty of Rome," or when he says: "*The last feeble murmurs* of paganism arraigned Christianity as the cause of the desertion of the city by her ancient and mighty gods" (*loc. cit.*).

But the very fact that Bishop Augustine (undoubtedly in 410 the first pen and foremost mind and voice of the Christian world) was then moved to design and begin to execute his vast apologetic work, *De Civitate Dei* —this should make one hesitate in assuming that mere "feeble murmurs" would have caused so strong a rejoinder from the Christian side. And Milman has been content merely to point to these books of Augustine; he really had no space in his larger task to dwell on them. They certainly are a very positive part of the history of Latin Christianity.

It remains for us now to study the aim and character of this famous work. It is certainly one of the greater documents of universal history. It is an epochal task indeed. With it, these essays and studies will be fitly concluded. Why? Because no other written body of utterance so distinctly and definitely marks the end of the classical world and of much of the pagan things

connected with its essence as Augustine's monumental work on The City of God.

It was the sack of Rome, the Bishop of Hippo wrote, which provoked the pagan leaders to make the Christian religion responsible, and, as Augustine himself puts it, "*to blaspheme more bitterly than was their wont*[1]." He calls it his *grande opus*, as well he might, for it was one of his chief themes, say in 411–426, that is from his fifty-seventh to his seventy-second year. The first ten books are in the main controversial, the last twelve are devoted largely to the Christian and Biblical theses, the secular and the spiritual things, the mundane and the eternal, in their antagonism. Whether divinity scholars, historians, and philosophers of history, or classicists proper, are, or ought to be, more arrested or impressed by this gigantic treatise, I am, of course, quite unable to determine.

Even while he wrote, from book to book, year to year the disintegration of the Western Empire went on with steadily accelerating movement, as we may learn from his Spanish protégé, Orosius[2]; the very subjects of Rome had become weary of their subjectship. As in all these studies, I shall strive to present the sentiments,

[1] *Retractationes*, II, 43, 1: "Solito acerbius et amarius Deum verum blasphemare coeperunt. Unde ego, exardescens," etc., etc.

[2] "Ut inveniantur iam inter eos Romani" (*i.e.* so-called Roman citizens in Spain; since Caracalla, 211 A.D., every taxpayer in a Roman province was thereby a "Roman citizen"). "Qui malint inter barbaros *pauperem libertatem* quam inter Romanos *tributariam sollicitudinem* sustinere" (Orosius, VII, 47, 7). It was rumoured that *Ataulph* who married Theodosius' daughter *Placidia* (clearly a union of dynastic design) had been planning to make Romania into Gothia and to become Caesar Augustus of the new empire (*op. cit.* VII, 43, 4), but had realized that his Goths were not yet sufficiently civilized for this end. He was slain in a plot, at Barcellona, in 415 A.D.

convictions, and outlook of Augustine as directly as possible. As ever in Augustine, we shall find the fervid rhetor and the keen dialectician blended in his quite extraordinary *ingenium*.

The world of 410 *Anno Domini* compared the Gaul of 390 B.C., Brennus, with the Goth of the present catastrophe, but Augustine claimed that Alaric was more humane. The Goths, for one thing, spared almost every senator (III, 29)[1]. Marius really in his return from exile (87–86 B.C.) was vastly more merciless in dealing with the aristocrats among his own fellow citizens, and Sulla's proscriptions (82–81 B.C.) took the lives of more senators than the Goths were able even to despoil[2]. Did not the Arian-Christian Goths spare many pagan aristocrats because these joined the processions (I, 2)? And still Augustine's basic personal culture even then is so impregnated with Vergil[3], that he does not hesitate to apply to the Almighty Himself the line (Verg. *Aen.* VI, 854), "Parcere subiectis et debellare superbos," as a sententious variant of 1 Peter V, 5, "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." During the sack of Rome, Augustine says, many claimed to be Christians who were not. Troy's *Penates* were, indeed, through Aeneas transferred to Rome, but they saved neither Troy nor Rome—but no one has ever heard of such a check to the fury of conquerors as the basilicas of St Peter and St Paul proved to be for Alaric's maddened bands (I, 7), and

[1] In this chapter citations in parenthesis, unless another work is named, refer to *De Civitate Dei*.

[2] Because their spoliation was completed within three days.

[3] Comparetti in his much noted monograph, *Vergil in the Middle Ages*, while discussing Donatus, Servius, Macrobius, Jerome, does not seem to have taken Augustine into his survey.

these asylums were so designated by Alaric himself—for Christ's sake. Many indeed lost their all; thus Augustine's friend Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, became destitute. Some Christians, too, were tortured to disclose the hiding places of their valuables. In referring to violated nuns he is reminded of Lucretia.

The final thesis of the Bishop of Hippo is this: The Roman aristocrats of the pagan side in their present distress are complaining of the Christian times because they desire to continue their mode of living, a life spent in thoughtless luxury and unrestrained self-indulgence[1]. And while whole peoples in the East and very great cities[2] were lamenting the catastrophe of the old capital in a public or official way, in Rome itself (Augustine charges) the theatres were filled as never before. There had been no genuine repentance, he says. The forbidding of public pagan worship was made responsible by the pagans—as though Rome had never suffered before such prohibition (I, 36). But, he goes on, there was also another class among the Old Believers who maintained, or claimed the right to maintain, the ancient worship, for the sake of a life to come, and the bliss of souls beyond, the Neoplatonists, the followers of Porphyry. Here Augustine affirmed quite frankly that Christian theology held some important articles of faith in common with the Neoplatonists, as of the immortality of souls, or, that the true God created the world, and that He ruled the universe through His Providence (I, 36). Alaric's short stay in Rome, he claimed, was infinitely more moderate than would have

[1] "Nisi quia vestram luxuriam cupitis habere securam, et perditissimis moribus, remota omni molestiarum asperitate, diffluere" (I, 30).

[2] Probably Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople.

been the doings of Rhadagais if *he* had ever reached Rome. *He* would have spared no man's life, no woman's honour. During that barbarian's advance it was said in the talk of Carthage, the capital of Augustine's home province, that the pagans at Rome said: "No one can stop Rhadagais, because he is daily sacrificing to pagan gods" (v, 23). The moral decadence in Rome, described by Sallust (*Catil.* 5) with trenchant words—do the Old Believers ascribe this to the Roman gods? (II, 19). Now, what does the service in Christian basilicas offer the visitor? We transcribe here from Augustine (II, 28):

They [the opponents of Christianity] complain that from the infernal yoke of the most unclean powers and from the association of retribution, men are saved through the name of Christ, and are brought over into the daylight of the most wholesome piety from that night of the most deadly impiety; and they mutter, unfair and ungrateful as they are, and more deeply and tightly [*obstrictius*] possessed by that wicked spirit—because the populace [of given communities] stream together to the churches, decorously, in teeming numbers, with proper separation of the sexes, where they hear how righteously they ought to live here [on earth], in order that after this life they may deserve[1] to live in bliss and for ever—where [in the churches] as the sacred Scriptures and the teaching of righteousness resound[2] from a higher place in sight of all[3], both those who are doers shall hear to their reward, and those who are not doers shall hear to their judgment For though certain men come as mockers of such teaching, all their assurance is either laid aside through a sudden change [conversion] or checked through awe and a sense of shame. For nothing base or

[1] *Mereantur.* I need not say that the present writer does not accept the doctrine of any one's *deserving* eternal life.

[2] Or "are uttered" so as to reach all parts of the assembly—*personante.*

[3] Not before an esoteric body of the initiated, with degrees, as in the caves of the Mithras-cult.

shameful is presented to them[1] for beholding or imitating—where either the precepts of the true God are made to enter [*insinuantur*] or His wonders are told, or His gifts are praised, or His blessing asked for.

Thus in Christian worship. Now contrast with this the *Floralia* of the older state religion, which were still celebrated in Rome, when Augustine wrote, April 28–May 3, having been established in the year 178 B.C. This was originally done "that Tellus [the Earth] might be appeased by her own bounties"; also it was a usage that the Roman spectators demanded, that the harlots, who were the actresses in those celebrations, drop their garments and dance naked[2]. We may as well append here a passage from a letter of Augustine (*Epistolae*, 91, 5), written about 408:

> In so many places is Jupiter painted, cast in metal, chiselled, written, read, acted, sung, danced,...these evils of disgrace... if, with no one checking them, they are worshipped in temples, laughed at in theatres[3], when to these they sacrifice victims..., when players act these things and dance them [in pantomime], cities are said to be flourishing, etc., etc.

And still Augustine aptly urged that the older Romans had rigidly excluded all actor folk from all civil rights or honours. Why did not prophetic Apollo, a tutelary power for Troy, warn King Laomedon that his breach of contract would ultimately cause the destruction of Troy? We may say here once for all that

[1] As in many of the pagan cults, as that of the Magna Mater.

[2] Valerius Maximus, II, 10, 8. Once the people forbore making this demand, on account of Cato's presence. When that Stoic became aware of this, he rose to go, so as not to interfere with the established Roman pleasures. Cf. Lactantius, *Institutiones*, I, 20; Seneca, *Epistolae Morales*, 97, 8.

[3] One gains the impression that the edicts of Gratian, Theodosius, Honorius, were ignored in many communities, because in many communities the pagans still out-numbered the Christians.

Augustine, Roman as he was in his basic culture and in his political consciousness, had utterly emancipated himself from all awe and idealization in dealing with the so-called greatness of ancient or earlier Rome. He is far from admiring that political principle, which men call imperialism, that insatiable craving for exploitation and control which always has assumed all kinds of masks, whether pleading a higher law beneficial to weaker states or that ultimate argument of the practical politician, necessity. Let us, he says (III, 14) put away the glamour and glitter of "Victory," let us solely weigh the bare transactions, deeds, political achievements. He condemns the empire of Cyrus, the sea power of Athens, the hegemony of Sparta. "That lust for holding sway keeps in unrest and grinds to pieces the human race with great evils[1]." What faulty standards of "greatness" there! viz. for destroying an antagonist; at bottom nothing better than the victory of a gladiator, though on a larger scale. So he traverses the history of that imperial commonwealth, from conquest to conquest, from epoch to epoch, scorning the idea that the tutelary deities of the Capitoline Hill were at all concerned in all of it (III, 17). Where were they in Rome's trials and tribulations? What assurance, therefore, to charge to Christ the secular disasters of these latter times! (III, 30.)

Harken back. What of the Civil Wars of Rome, long before the coming of Christ: Marius and Sulla, Sertorius in Spain, Lepidus and Catulus, Catiline, Caesar and Pompey, down to Augustus, under whom Christ was born? The first rise of Octavian Augustus

[1] An ever memorable text: "Libido ista dominandi magnis malis agitat et conterit humanum genus" (III, 14).

brought on the violent death of Cicero, through the leaguing together of the former with Antony. Evidently Augustine, like his humble follower Orosius in Spain, rapidly surveyed his Livy once more, this too, obviously, with larger vision and more intense earnestness than when he began his professional career as a *grammaticus*. Remove equity and justice, and what are great conquests aught but great robberies? He tells the anecdote of Alexander the Great and the captured pirate. When the King asked the man how he came to trouble the seas, the prisoner answered with taunting frankness: "My motives are the same as yours for troubling the world. Because I do it in a small vessel, I am called a robber; because you do it with a great armada, you are called supreme commander." There, too, had been the Assyrian Empire of Ninus, later the Median, and the Persian. Did the gods forsake their favourites from epoch to epoch?

We cannot here dwell on the bewildering array of the Romans' nature-forces or "gods" attending the Romans' life from conception and birth to the grave; we have here, in Augustine's farewell analysis of paganism, largely excerpts from Terentius Varro, the great antiquarian of Cicero and Caesar's generation, whose works then furnished matter to Old Believers like Servius[1], no less than to the protagonist of the Christian order, Augustine himself. James Russell Lowell's phrase of "murdered paganism" is very impressive, as sententious *dicta* often are, but wide of historical truth; if ever there was a *slow* agony of a moribund civilization, dying from within, it was there and then. For those Old

[1] *V. Serviana*, by E. G. Sihler, *American Journal of Philology*, 1910, vol. xxxi, pp. 1–24.

Believers it was the age of *Theocrasia*[1], the "blending of the gods," the effort to strengthen the old order by this fusion of ethnical cults, the self-emasculation of the priests of the Great Mother of Phrygia, the cave of Mithras, Eleusinian rites, the vileness of Bacchic Mysteries, Isis and Serapis; with all this, and in all this, the plausible adaptability of "physical interpretation" of the myths, that elusive juggling with allegory, which means *nothing*, because it means, or can be made to mean *anything* and everything, from Philo Judaeus onward.

May we refer to it once more? In pointing to certain phenomena of classic paganism enduring in his own generation, in a curious and popular way, Augustine says:

> But indeed that great Mother of the Gods [the Earth] brought emasculated men even into Roman temples and preserved that cruel fashion.... What, in comparison with this nasty thing, are the thefts of Mercury, the wantonness of Venus, the debauchery and vileness of the rest, *which we would cite from the books if they were not daily sung and danced in the theatres?*

Evidently no very great or general mutation since Lucian's time, in the world visible to the naked eye, in the face of things and on the surface of current life.

Further on Augustine weighs and values the philosophical schools of the past in a very general survey.

[1] As we have again and again observed in this work, in the fifth century, even after the time now considered, the Neoplatonic cultivation of idol-figures still had confessors and propagandists, such as Heraiskos, of whom Damaskios relates that he had a personal inborn faculty of "distinguishing the living and the non-living sacred cult-figures." As soon as he gazed upon them, his heart was "wounded" by the divine inspiration of possession—or not—whenever it was an inanimate idol and non-participating in divine inspiration. Cf. Suidas, s.v. *Heraiskos*, transcribed from Photius, p. 343, with wonderful myths and magic lore concerning this late Neoplatonist, related and recited by that last sect of classic paganism. Proklos rated him even higher than himself.

We promptly realize that it was for him but a mere prelude, in order to reach Plato and the "Platonists," *i.e.* the Neoplatonists, in whose loftier and more spiritual doctrines he still even then professed a strong interest. Some of these he considered kin to Christian doctrine[1], and the highest achievement within the totality of classic civilization, such as the immortality of the soul, the creation of the world by the true God, also His Providence, with which He rules His creation, as we saw before. We incidentally learn from Augustine that Greek still was the dominant language among the cultured pagans[2]. Here Augustine also touches on that ancient problem (much discussed among the Alexandrine Jews from Aristobulus to Philo), how Plato gained his monotheism, realizing that chronological difficulties stand in the way of assuming any personal influence like that of Isaiah (VIII, 11). The Bishop of Hippo, in fact, is still impressed with the Platonism of Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus, as well as with that of Apuleius of Madaura, his own fellow-provincial of an earlier generation. Why does Augustine think so well of them? Because they define the highest happiness possible for the immortal soul as some association with God. Still, with all this loftier lore, they have practised accommodation to the worship of popular and traditional idolatry. But right here the Christian position permits no compromise, in the two summary commandments of our Lord[3] (Matt. xxii, 37; Deut. vi, 5).

[1] "Qui apud illos excellentissima gloria clari sunt, *et nobiscum multa sentiunt* (I, 36).

[2] *In gentibus* (VIII, 10).

[3] The differences between the texts in the citation of Augustine and Jerome are slight. Matthew has ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, etc.; the Septuagint has ἐξ, etc.

As to Augustine's juxtaposition of Plotinus' doctrine of the divine essence and descent of the soul (Plato's *Phaedrus*) with St John's Light of the World (i, 6 sqq.), I put it aside, as in a previous chapter I put aside the Clementine parallels, because these are of no spiritual authority whatever, and, besides, of questionable relevancy. The plain fact is, that the speculative element remained strong in Augustine's *ingenium* even in his last years. It is fashionable, I know, to admire "breadth," which often is a euphemism for ignorance or indifference or superficiality. Such affinity Augustine felt more for Plotinus. To Porphyry Augustine is much less friendly. That biographer and successor of Plotinus taught theurgy[1] so-called, and that the gods themselves even could be "worked upon" by the prayers and sacrifices of men. And, further, Porphyry was unwilling to conceive Christ as "the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. i, 24, *Christum Dei virtutem et Dei sapientiam*) on which conception and correlated faith, after all, everything depends, then and now and always[2]. The great and insuperable obstacle that stood between Christianity and Porphyry—what was it? It was the Incarnation:

> You are unwilling to accept the Incarnation of the unchangeable Son of God, by which [viz. the Incarnation] we are saved, so that we may be able to reach that which we believe or in the slightest degree understand. Therefore, you see somehow or other, though from afar off, although with obscure vision, the

[1] "Porphyrius per nescio quam 'theurgicam' disciplinam etiam ipsos deos obstrictos passionibus et perturbationibus dicit" (x, 10).

[2] And I am well aware that there was an aspiration active among earnest Neoplatonists comparable to the monasticism and celibacy practised among the Christians of that time.

fatherland in which one must abide, but you hold not the way by which one must go[1].

The first ten books of his mighty task deal with the paganism which Christianity had combated from its own beginning; it is the controversial part. The last twelve present the Christian conception of the City of God in this life and world as well as in its transcendent vision of eternity. In this world, indeed, the two communities appear and are curiously intertwined and fused —until they be separated for ever by the Last Judgment. So the Bishop of Hippo opens the *codices* of his Bible and surveys, with many a digression, the plan and sequence of revelation from Eden to the consummation of all things and the eternal bliss of those who hold a franchise in the City of God. It is, indeed, a vast survey; he deals with the blessed angels and the fallen ones, with Satan, with sin (XI, 7–19), for which the Creator is not responsible, whereas the original design of man was to be in perfect harmony with God. Further on, what was the *causa efficiens* of evil Will? (XII, 7.) Here he protests against presenting that grave problem in this manner at all. One should conceive sin as a defect, a deficiency, a *minus* (if I may so state it), not as a substance at all, but as something essentially negative, a withdrawal from the good, something relative rather than absolute. Next arises the problem of *time*, which always[2] arrested his speculative questioning. He dwells on the Stoic theory of recurrent cycles, their "Great

[1] "Sed incarnationem incommutabilis Filii Dei, *qua salvamur*, ut ad illa, quae credimus, venire possimus, non vultis agnoscere. Itaque videtis utcumque, etsi de longinquo, etsi acie caligante, patriam, in qua manendum est, sed viam, qua eundum est, non tenetis" (X, 29).

[2] As in the latter part of the Confessions.

Year[1]," and of the idea of many worlds (XI, 11 sqq.). God alone was Creator; Augustine rejects Plato's *Timaeus* with its theory of creative sub-deities, where Porphyry dissents from Plato (XII, 26).

Augustine, in XII–XIII, attempts a kind of theodicy, justifying the Biblical narrative of the ways of God with man, an apologetical discussion in the main[2]. We must not, he continues, deduce sin from materiality, as the Neoplatonists did and likewise the Manichaeans (XIV, 4–5). He sets Christian ethics, as exemplified in the Golden Rule (Matt. vii, 12), over against Stoic theories and categories, quoting some of these in their original Greek technical terms[3]. For himself, the authority of the Gospels is absolute: "Cum legimus eos, *quorum auctoritati resultare fas non est*." Himself he classifies with those "who came into the church of Christ *ex gentibus*" (XIV, 9). In that consciousness he reverts to Paul, the *doctor gentium*, this, too, with a sweep of intensity and glowing eloquence, which permits us in some measure to estimate what force he must have exerted when in his own pulpit his voice reached the

[1] Cf. Servius on *Aeneid*, III, 284: "Omnium siderum eodem unde profecta sunt,...ad unum tempus reversio" (Cic. *De Finibus*, II, 102, with Madvig's commentary). Censorinus, *De Die Natali*, c. 18, 11.

[2] We marvel with what seriousness Augustine adduces the soul doctrines borrowed by Vergil from Plato and incorporated in *Aeneid*, VI. But we realize again, that the National Epic, as in the Commentary by Servius of Rome, the contemporary of Augustine, had become a veritable storehouse of culture, religion, philosophy, and patriotism for all Romans clinging to the Old Order and endowed with an almost transcendent authority. (Cf. *Serviana*, by E. G. Sihler, *American Journal of Philology*, 1910.)

[3] XIV, 8. Incidentally we learn, that some Christian exegesis interpolated Matthew vii, 12, "quaecunque vultis ut homines faciant vobis" [*bona*]. They feared retribution might be deduced from the text. Augustine appeals to the Greek original text.

ears and souls of his hearers. In the City of God all citizens are in pilgrimage (*in hac peregrinatione*). He goes forward in Genesis to Cain and Abel, and thence, through books XV–XVII, presents the history of Israel, to Haggai, Zachariah, and Ezra.

In book XVIII, Augustine enters upon a new task. He endeavours, quite unmistakably to tread in the footsteps of Eusebius and Jerome. In what way? The *Chronicon* of Eusebius, latinized and supplemented about 380 A.D. by Jerome[1], invited Augustine at this stage of his great task to utilize it for the same. Why? Because here was available the synchronism of Israel on the one side, and of pagan annals on the other—the two commonwealths, may I say, as they advanced, *pari passu*, elaborated, from the promise to Abraham down to the Incarnation at Bethlehem and beyond.

The Alexandrine Jews, such as Aristobulus under Ptolemy VI Philopator (180–145), from racial pride, had begun this work of synchronism, with the incidental (though quite futile) thesis, not only that Homer and Hesiod, nay mythical Orpheus—that Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, etc., were not merely later than Moses, but that to him they owed much of their loftier lore. Later, in Trajan's time, Justus of Tiberias, a Jewish scholar, wrote a synopsis of secular and Jewish data, from Moses onward. The utter omission of Christ and Christianity stimulated a Christian writer, Julius Africanus, to construct a synchronistic survey with Christian data properly inserted, carrying the work down to 217 A.D. We have no space here even to glance at the basic work of Greek chronologers, such as Eratosthenes, Apollodorus or Alexander Polyhistor, all of which was finally compiled in the *Chronicon* of Eusebius of Caesarea.

No wonder that such parallelism urged itself on Augustine in his survey of the two cities, "the one of

[1] During his sojourn at Constantinople, when returning to Rome from his first monastic sojourn, that of the Syrian desert, near Antioch.

God, the other of this world." He draws freely on Eusebius and Jerome. Thus he dwells on Genesis xlix, 10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet," etc. As Jacob was dying[1], Eratos was reigning at Sikyon, Argos at Argos. Rome was founded 753 in the time of Hiskia. The prophecy of the "Erythraean Sibyl" we will gladly pass by; both Jews and Christians were awfully misled by these pious frauds[2]. Coming down to the Septuagint Version of the Hebrew Scriptures, Augustine speaks of it as of a work of Providential importance, claiming even divine inspiration for the Alexandrine translators[3]! The chapter on the Incarnation and the Messianic prophecies, and on the New Testament as the consummation and complement of the Hebrew Scriptures, also on the Diaspora of the Jews, and their racial endurance, exhibits the clearness and keenness which men will always associate with Augustine (XVIII, 46).

Further topics are: The claims of Israel as the chosen people, the tares among the wheat in the expansion of the Christian church in this world; the spread of Christianity through suffering, the wholesome reaction on

[1] Jerome, *Eusebius*, p. 18, ed. Schoene: "Jacob CXLVII aetatis suae diem obiit *profetans de Christo* et de vocatione gentium." Eusebius (as transcribed in *Chronicon Paschale*).

[2] W. von Christ, *Griech. Lit. Gesch.*, 3rd ed., 1898, p. 792 sq.

[3] He knew also of other Greek versions of the Old Testament, such as those of Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion. The Latin version of the Septuagint he considered the standard in the service of the churches, and while speaking of Jerome's version with respect, Augustine personally preferred the use of the Latinized Septuagint; we append his weighty words: "Quamvis non defuerit temporibus nostris presbyter Hieronymus homo doctissimus et omnium trium linguarum peritus, qui non ex Graeco sed ex Hebraeo in Latinum eloquium easdem Scripturas converterit" (XVIII, 43). Seventy translators must be more trustworthy than one.

the church through her struggle with heresies; whether an Eleventh Persecution is in store for Christendom; the widespread notion among pagans, that 365 years would mark the limit of life for the Christian church (counting from the Crucifixion, March 24, 30 A.D.), adding data of Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, sweeping down to the present, the era of Honorius, when in Carthage itself (407–408?) through the *comites* Gaudentius and Jovius the temples of the pagans were destroyed and the cult-figures broken (c. 54). In concluding his synoptic Christian chronology, the Bishop of Hippo used these striking words: "We, therefore, who are, and are called, *Christians*, believe *not in Peter* but in Him, in whom Peter believed." The anti-Jeromian and anti-Romanist stand of the great Bishop is here plainly expressed. Augustine, in a word, is not yet a *Roman* Catholic, and still free from the domination, *in spiritualibus*, of the old capital and its arrogating bishop.

In book XIX, steadily coming nearer to his goal, he takes up the *Summum Bonum*[1], the Aim of Existence, the ethical theses of the main schools of Greek thought, the antithesis therein also to the Christian aim of union with God and the bliss of eternal life. We desire to estimate "the dialectic processes of mortals by which they have mightily toiled to create bliss for themselves in the non-happiness of this life[2]." There is an

[1] The familiar and ultra-fervid pleading of Zielinski, *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte*, 2nd ed., Teubner, 1908, on pp. 443 sq., deals with Augustine. Zielinski's enthusiasm, however, like that of many special pleaders, leads him to consummate absurdities like this: "Die Abhängigkeit des Christentums von Cicero..." (p. 149).

[2] "Argumenta Mortalium, quibus sibi ipsi beatitudinem facere in huius vitae infelicitate moliti sunt" (XIX, 1).

apologetic strain here, as the entire work is a body of apologetics, meant for both camps, and confronting particularly the history, the religion, and the philosophy of the Graeco-Roman world in its accomplished work and completed course.

Varro (the veritable cyclopaedia for that generation, as we have seen) in his own day had a personal preference for the New Academy of Antiochus; the pleasure-cult of Epicurus also is reviewed; we hear further on of that soul-tranquillity (ἀταραξία) on which Stoics and Epicureans *seemed* to agree. Over against all this the City of God sets Eternal Life as the *summum bonum*; of course the great axiom of Habakkuk ii, 4 (*Justus ex fide vivit*)[1] refers not at all to this little material life. But in the same terrestrial span, Augustine urges, no genuine good or genuine right conduct is of ourselves, "unless *He* who gave that very faith, by which we believe we must be aided by *Him*, aids us in our faith and in our prayer[2]." This differs fundamentally from the self-righteousness and absolute moral self-determination of the Stoics, from the pleasure-cult of the Epicureans, or from soul-tranquillity, or from various combinations of all these. These Graeco-Roman moralists, all of them, with marvellous futility, claimed *that they could be blissful here* (in this life) *and gain bliss by their own efforts*[3]. Here Augustine cites 1 Corinthians iii, 20: "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain." Augustine was well aware, too, that suicide was an essential final resort for the Stoic

[1] But *vivet* in Septuagint and Vulgate; cf. Rom. i, 17.

[2] Much of Augustine's theology is contained in these few and simple words (XIX, 4).

[3] "Hic beati esse et a se ipsis beati fieri mira vanitate voluerunt" (XIX, 4).

sage, and an essential item in that philosophy of self-determination. Peace indeed is the supreme quest of all, even for semi-bestial beings, such as Cacus of the Aeneas legend[1]. Later Augustine dwells on Freedom (c. 15), and with the characteristic incisiveness of his analytical habit he quickly arrives at basic principles, as of slavery in the spiritual aspects, as of sin, or of the subjection of the nations to polytheism.

Now, as for the Greek schools of thought, while freely availing himself of their academic terms and delimitations, he is fully aware of the fact, that no genuine adjustment to these of the Christian theses is either desirable or even possible. As for ancient Rome, her political morality was purely selfish or imperialistic; they scorned the consent of the governed and the self-determination of other nations; they sought, in a word, to exploit the ancient world. Why then should one become ecstatic about that political fabric (c. 21)? Why (one may read between the lines) grieve at the passing thereof? Or should one identify the God of the Christians with Jupiter Optimus Maximus (c. 22)? Here again Augustine turns to the writings of Porphyry, the defender of paganism, and even then, after his death, the most noted antagonist of Christianity[2].

We notice in this precious reference, that Porphyry and his school stood essentially where Celsus had stood in the age of the Antonines, as when speaking of the crucifixion and the "dead god" (of the foolish Christians) justly put to death by the Jews whose conception of God was so much higher[3] than that of the

[1] Vergil, *Aen.* VIII, 195 sqq.

[2] Fifteen books, Κατὰ Χριστιανῶν and, *here*, *The Philosophy from Oracles* (XIX, 23).

[3] Precisely so put by the Emperor Julian.

Christians—the Neoplatonist here forgetting that polytheism was a deadly sin in the Mosaic code.

Elsewhere Porphyry claimed that the Christians were a kind of Neoplatonists without being aware of it; the soul of that eminent man, Jesus, was actually in Heaven, with other souls of the blessed. Odd, then, how Christ should have been justly crucified! Hecate and Apollo did not agree there. We see that the Scriptural and the philosophical Augustine dwelled together in one soul, even in this, his autumnal period; even then for the last great occasion of his life, he confronted the culture of the Graeco-Roman past with a categorical *Non possumus!*

The twentieth book presents the great and grave theme of the Last Judgment, a treatment avoiding incursion into secular speculation, of course; it is distinctly addressed to Christians. It is a consolation and a monition to bear with patience the evils of this world and not to overrate its boons. The *grammaticus*, the *rhetor*, the secular philosopher have vanished. We must be content with a narrow presentation. He cites the Old Testament[1] about fifty-six times, the New[2] some one hundred and twenty-nine times. The heaviest single citation bearing on this theme of eschatology is 2 Thessalonians ii, 1–12: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," etc.

In these twelve verses there are found some eighteen divergencies from Jerome's version, all, however, of a minor nature, as in synonyms or in the order of words. If anything, Augustine's

[1] As to the canon of the Old Testament, Augustine still believed (xx, 3) that Solomon was the author of Ecclesiastes; he stubbornly clings to vanitas *vanitantium* (Eccl. i, 2).

[2] The Apocalypse is cited about seventeen times. "Joannes evangelista in libro qui dicitur Apocalypsis" (c. 7).

version is a little more rigorously accurate than Jerome's, except in verse 3. Was Nero meant[1]? But even then[2] there were many forms of exegesis, as we see in his own allusions: *Quidam putant, Nonnulli suspicantur, Alii vero.*

The topic of the Antichrist suggests to him at once to cite 1 John ii, 18: "Little children, it is the last time," etc., which he latinizes thus: "Pueri, novissima hora est, et sicut audistis quod Antichristus sit venturus, nunc autem Antichristi multi facti sunt," etc. Of course 1 Thessalonians iv, 14 also figures heavily. Of Old Testament writers, Daniel and Malachi seemed to him particularly important. He could say much more, but this twentieth book must now be concluded[3].

In the last two books he deals with the penalties of the wicked and the felicity of the just. The eternity of that punishment—was it just? Here, too, he brings in the theory of purgatory which Plato had developed and iterated[4]: The evil and wicked to suffer after death, for a definite period, after, and in consequence of, a judgment, and before their next incarnation. In the pool beyond Acheron they dwell (*Phaedo*, 113 D), "being purged [καθαιρόμενοι] and paying the penalty for their wrong doings, if one has committed some act of injustice, and for their good deeds they bear off honours, each one according to his worth." See also the great myth, the Vision of the Arminian Er (*Rep.* X, 614), imitated by Cicero in his *Dream of Scipio*, in the *Republic*, c. VI. The Neoplatonists again loomed large in Augustine's vision.

[1] Or emperor worship as an institution?

[2] Cf. Alford or Meyer.

[3] "Multas evangelicas apostolicasque sententias de divino isto iudicio novissimo video mihi esse practereundas, ne hoc volumen in nimiam longitudinem provolvatur" (XX, 19 *initio*).

[4] *Phaedrus*, 246 D sqq., 250 C (cf. E. G. Sihler, *Virgil and Plato*, Amer. Philol. Assoc., 1880); *Gorgias*, 526 F; *Rep.* X, 614.

In other ways, too, we observe here the beginnings of Romanism (c. 18) as in this, that God's attention was measured by the degree of sanctity of those who pray—or by intercession of saints; still others make membership in the Catholic Church the saving clause or condition. These and many other theses Augustine rejects, mainly on Scriptural grounds: "Into *the* everlasting fire prepared," etc. (Matt. xxv, 41). And there were exegetical voices or pens in his day of men who declared that this must be taken as a mere threat, not as a prediction of a coming reality. It will not do, Augustine urges, to rely on ecclesiastic membership. Many also rush (c. 27) to the sacramental immersion as to a kind of celestial insurance. There is, after all, no justification but in Christ. He shrinks from approving the practice then much in vogue, to rely upon the merits and prayers of more saintly friends. Who would dare to specify this class of sins, which may be thus favoured?

The last book (XXII) deals with Eternal Bliss. Here he, a Roman by culture, training, and tradition, takes up the figure of Romulus, founder of Rome, and sire, in a way, of the Roman Empire; there was, later on, an official and perpetual apotheosis of that first king; with this he places in a kind of parallelism the infinitely greater figure of Christ, Founder and Eternal King of the City of God, who came in the fulness of time, and whose historicity is established beyond cavil (c. 7). Here Augustine is tempted into a digression which presents his day and the official practical attitude of the hierarchy of his day with startling directness. It is the cult of martyrs and the miraculous phenomena associated with that cult, that concrete and palpable element in faith and ritual which always has appealed to the

masses and the many—the *icon* being more enduring than the *iconoclast*. The Bishop of Hippo then, *aperto ore*, and we may add, *bona fide*, narrates some two score of such "revelations," or manifestations, in Milan (the bones of Protasius and Gervasius) and in a great many different dioceses of Africa, many wonderful healings particularly. Even then earth brought from Jerusalem was suspended in chambers (c. 8) that the sleeper might suffer no evil. Later the same earth was dug in by the owner at a certain spot where prayers more than ordinarily efficacious might be offered up; it thus became a "sacred spot" much resorted to. "We [Augustine and a fellow bishop] did not resist." We read this with sadness; was there after all much difference between these things and the theurgy of the Neoplatonists? (The Eucharist is—c. 8—designated as *sacrificium corporis Christi*.) In a word, Augustine fully believes that such extraordinary blessings are accomplished, and why? "Because the martyr gave up his life for *that* faith" (*i.e.* in the Christ who was a wonder-worker), a logic we cannot very well follow or make our own. We notice also that Christians in that day "*prayed*" directly to martyrs. We cite from Neander (Torrey, II, p. 335):

> But it was by means of this unwise connivance, springing from an anxiety (which Neander compared quite aptly with the *parentalia* of pagan ritual) to promote conversion by masses, that encouragement was given to the habit of confounding pagan and Christian customs.

Going forward, Augustine discusses the question, whether a material body is thinkable in Eternal Life; whereas the Neoplatonists, in denial, relied on Plato (*Timaeus*, 32). As for himself, Augustine cites Romans viii, 29: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did

predestinate [to be] conformed to the image of his Son." And Christ is the Perfect Man. Nothing can remain lost or scattered in dust to the Will from which proceeds that final recovery and consummation. Great indeed and universal are the miseries and evils of our world, due to the Fall. We must not leave here uncited a tremendous passage written by Augustine (c. 22):

> What of the love itself of so many things vain and harmful, and, from this, gnawing cares, [mental] disturbances, mournings, dreads, crazy joys, discords, suits at law, wars, plots, bursts of anger, personal feuds, deception, flattery, cheating, theft, robbery, betrayal of trust, pride, scheming for place, envy, murder, parricide, cruelty, savagery, worthlessness, luxury, waywardness, shamelessness, sexual baseness, fornications, adulteries, incests and debauchery and uncleanness against the nature of both sexes which it is unseemly even to name, sacrileges, heresies, blasphemies, oppressions of the innocent, calumnies, defraudations, dishonesty of lawyers, false witness, unfair verdicts, acts of force, highway robberies, and whatever of such evils does not enter the mind and still does not withdraw from that life of men? But these are the evils of men, and still issuing from that root of error and perverted affection with which every son of Adam is born.

And a little further on[1]: "The evil which is derived from one's parent, and the good which is bestowed by the Creator."

The Neoplatonists indeed deny that there *can* be any physical or material resurrection, but to the Omnipotent but a single thing is impossible. *He cannot lie* (c. 25), and corporality is no bar to bliss.

Then, as for "*seeing God*," Augustine cites Philippians iv, 7, "the Peace of God, *which passeth all understanding*," and frankly says: "*If I shall be willing to tell*

[1] C. 24: "Malum quod a parente trahitur, et bonum quod a creante tribuitur."

the truth, I do not know[1]." Nor does he claim to know what saints will do in that celestial body; our terrestrial and mortal standards of vision and power furnish us no basis whatever of computation and conjecture for that spiritual realm, when "the invisible things of God" (Rom. i, 20) will deeply satisfy our ken. The beatitude of all will be, that the blessed will be *unable to sin* any more[2], nor die; here, indeed, in our world, while bliss is lost, we have not lost the craving for bliss, even then. It will be the Sabbath of all time, a veritable Seventh Period, the rest of saints when God will be all in all[3]. "There we shall have leisure and vision, we shall have vision and love, we shall have love and shall have praise."

[1] "Si verum velim dicere, nescio" (c. 29).

[2] "Hoc autem novissimum eo potentius erit, quo peccare non poterit" (c. 30).

[3] "Ibi vacabimus et videbimus, videbimus et amabimus, amabimus et laudabimus."

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